JUNE 1958

COMMENTARY

Education and the Cold War

Have Our Schools Failed? — SPENCER BROWN

How Free Is Soviet Science? — LEOPOLD LABEDZ

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The Politics of Recession — ROBERT LEKACHMAN

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Adam—A Poem — IRVING FELDMAN

From the Journal of Emmanuel Ringelblum

Khrushchev in Command — RICHARD LOWENTHAL

The Cave at Machpelah—A Play — PAUL GOODMAN

Cedars of Lebanon
A Medieval Jewish Tale

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Midge Decter — Gordon A. Craig — Nathan Glazer

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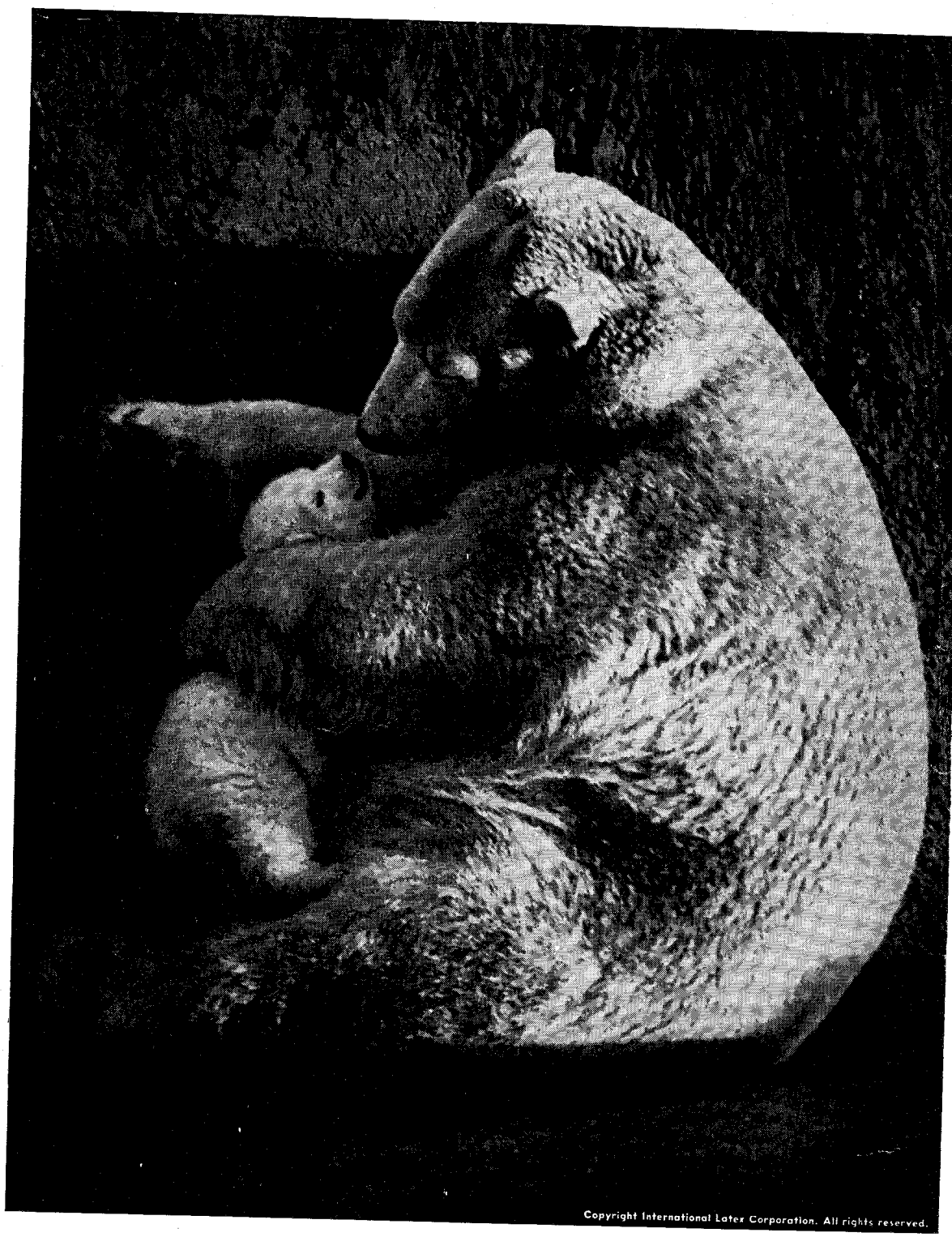

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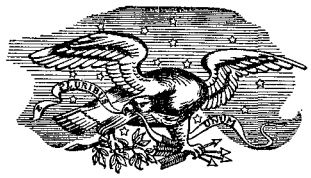

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IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES OF

COMMENTARY

The Crisis in France *Ray Alan*

A veteran political observer, who has frequently appeared in COMMENTARY, takes stock of the critical situation in France and North Africa brought about by the conflict between Paris and Algiers.

Russia in the Middle East *W. Z. Laqueur*

Colonel Nasser's recent visit to Moscow, and the outbreak of trouble in Lebanon, have highlighted an increasingly serious situation which is here examined by the author of *Communism and Nationalism in the Middle East* and other writings.

Henry James, the Alien, and the Jew *Leo B. Levy*

A study of Henry James's attitudes toward non-Anglo-Saxon peoples, and particularly toward the Jew—attitudes which Mr. Levy sees as a response to the beginnings of mass immigration to America, whose effect on the cultural tone of the country worried James and many of his contemporaries.

Some Recent Views of Group Prejudice *William Petersen*

During the past ten years important revisions have been undertaken in the older theory of prejudice. A sociologist notes these revisions and questions how much of an improvement they represent in understanding intergroup relations.

Humanism Today: A British View *Kathleen Nott*

Is secular humanism, as its critics claim, a "bankrupt" philosophy? Miss Nott, who is widely known in England for her witty sallies against the proponents of "dogmatic orthodoxy," reviews the situation of humanism today and attempts to isolate its indestructible core.

The Horns of Moses *Norman Cohn*

Ancient and medieval literature is full of allusions to the symbolism of horns, whose role in Jewish and Christian mythology is here discussed by a well-known historian.

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COMMENTARY

HAVE OUR SCHOOLS FAILED?

The Record and the Potential

SPENCER BROWN

IT IS a strong temptation these days to predict cynically that the chief effect of Sputnik on American schools will be the abolition of courses in driver training.

Our first reaction to Sputnik was anger, not unlike but vastly greater than the anger when the first Soviet atomic bomb went off. Then, it was widely (and probably correctly) asserted, we were betrayed: our secrets had been stolen by the backward Russians, who made up for their deficiencies in technology and physics by our gullibility and their skill in espionage. With Sputnik we had no such out. Though the Russians had corralled German scientists—perhaps more or better than we—it was a case of the Walrus and the Carpenter. We took as many as we could get.

During the Middle Ages (says Frank Sullivan in his story on the invention of the pretzel), when any country was at war with any other country, it was the custom to besiege Nuremberg. In modern America, when anything bad happens, it is the custom to scold the schools. Sputnik was a disaster, and the scolding has risen to a scream. Yet little of the scolding is new except its volume; what was valid or silly before is exactly as valid or silly now. And each person scolds in his accustomed manner—except Sloan Wilson, who, having orbited into the circulation of *Life*, has become notably more strident against the schools than when he wrote for *Harper's*.

America's failure to be first in satellites is not an educational but a political failure. Increased appropriations and governmental effort could have hoisted a satellite much sooner if it had seemed desirable to the people in power. It didn't. And if they were obtuse or badly advised or did not read the newspapers (in which for years the Alsops and others had been warning of Russian rockets), they can blame only the schools of an earlier generation. If a man is now over fifty, he went to school before John Dewey's ideas were widely practiced; and if he went to West Point, he can hardly be said to have suffered from progressive education.

Further, when America was the first to develop an atomic bomb, it was deemed a triumph of American technology and science, with the welcome assistance of scientists who had fled totalitarianism. Neither

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SPENCER BROWN's writings on education are well known to our readers. Among them are "How Educate the Gifted Child?" (June 1956) and "Dr. Flesch's Cure for Reading Troubles" (August 1955). Mr. Brown, who teaches at the Fieldston School in Riverdale in New York City, is author of a work on intercultural education, *They See for Themselves* (1945), and of *My Father's Business and Other Poems,* in Scribner's Poets of Today series.

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the theoretical knowledge nor the military know-how was adduced as a triumph of American education, though the first terrestrial chain reaction was established in the disused football stadium of an American university. If our schools have failed us in Sputniks and are losing us the Cold War, then they achieved the atomic bomb and victory in World War II, and Normandy and Saipan were won in the Rose Bowl or in the classrooms of PS 6.

In short, most of what purports to be criticism of American education is merely criticism of America—which is legitimate and necessary. Let us say what we wish, but let us be aware of what we are really talking about.

IT WAS evident long before October 1957 that education was approaching a crisis. All observers agree that we face an immediate and increasing shortage of high school facilities and an even more serious shortage of properly qualified teachers. Within the next few years, this shortage will have moved up into college, but without helping the high schools. "This is not guesswork. The children who will be of college age in 1970 have already been born, and the only question is whether the same or a larger proportion of them will enter college in the years ahead. Currently a little over 30 per cent of the college-age group is in college, and the proportion has been rising at the rate of about 1 per cent a year. In some states it has already reached 50 per cent."*

The teacher shortage is of almost impossible dimensions: "It has been estimated that over the next 15 years more than three new teachers must be recruited for every two we have today, that during the next decade one-half of all college graduates would have to enter the teaching profession in order to fill our needs."† Already the colleges are raiding the high schools for their best teachers: 14 per cent of new college teachers in the last few years came direct from high school positions. And "teacher-rustling" (the practice of luring teachers with slightly higher salaries) between communities and even states is big business and becoming bigger.**

Similarly, the present shortage of school buildings and classrooms is expected to become intolerable. Yet the President's budget, recommended to Congress *after* Sputnik, proposed $300 million *less* than the year before, a feat accomplished partly by dropping recommendations for school construction.

Furthermore, for over a year the press has been filled with dire predictions of the difficulties that present high-school students face in attempting to gain admission to college. There are not enough colleges, we are told; entrance requirements are rising sharply; and this year many ordinarily well-qualified seniors (and *a fortiori* their successors) will be disappointed in their ambitions. Their difficulties are decreased, however, by the tragic fact that each year 200,000 good students end their education with high school because they cannot afford college.

Lastly, since about 1950 there has been a steadily growing growl from many more or less qualified critics against the domination of American schools by progressive education and "the educationist bureaucracy," and against the illiteracy of our children and the consequent materialism and thinness of our culture. Now to the growl is added a roar that our children are learning practically no mathematics or science. The chief growlers have been rigid conservatives like Robert M. Hutchins and Arthur Bestor, gaudy polemicists like Albert Lynd and Mortimer Smith, and panacea-pushers like Rudolf Flesch. The roarers include generals, admirals, and well-known scientists, as well as other poli-

*Clarence Faust, "Rising Enrollments and Effective Use of Faculty Resources," *Bulletin of the Association of American Colleges,* Vol. XLIII, No. 2, 1957. Dr. Faust is President of the Fund for the Advancement of Education.

†Charles C. Cole, Jr., "What Must Be Done in Science Education," *College Board Review,* Winter 1958 (figures taken from *Teachers for Tomorrow,* Fund for the Advancement of Education, 1955). Dr. Cole is associate dean of Columbia College.

**Marie L. Caylor, "Teacher-Raiding Spreads, State to State," *The American Teacher,* April 1958.

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ticians. They have all made themselves heard by one means or another, and they have had increasing effect. Progressive education, for all its power and accomplishments, has for some years been on the defensive. In 1955 the Progressive Education Association, after about thirty years of vigor and ten more of decay, gently folded up—fooling no one by its announcement that its work was done and the battle won. Now, the general feeling goes, progressive education is quite dead, and only isolated voices are heard asking to read the will to see if there is any legacy for the children.

Shortage of teachers and professors, shortage of schools and colleges and scholarships, and long-continued failure of the expensive American educational system to teach anything significant—such are the cries heard separately or simultaneously. The food is poison, and such small portions! And the Russians are serving more and better.

THE last point, though vital to our political happiness and probably to our national existence, is paradoxically the easiest to discuss, if we do not allow our justified fear of Russian successes to deprive us of reason, and if we avoid the temptation of using these successes to grind our pet pedagogical axe.

Unfortunately few of us can resist this temptation. Doubly unfortunately, the spectacular articles in *Life** on the Educational Cold War have made so much noise that the whine of private honing is inaudible to all but sophisticated ears. *Life's* initial spread was misleading in the extreme: it purported to compare a typical Russian sixteen-year-old with a typical American contemporary. Alexei, the Russian, is finishing his tenth year and will go on to a university next year. Alexei seldom smiles. He is a zealous student, taught by strict, well-trained teachers; he is interested in nuclear physics; he is only beginning to speak a shy word to a girl. He spends three to four hours a day on homework. There is "purpose in his fun" too: he exercises his body with volley-ball and his mind with chess and concerts and piano practice. He is well read in Russian and has read the works of Shakespeare and Shaw in English.

Stephen, his American counterpart, has only just finished Stevenson's *Kidnapped;* he is in eleventh grade and will not go on to college until the year after next. He jokes in class (which is "relaxed and enlivened by banter"; by pure chance *Life's* photographer caught a girl in the back row reading *Modern Romances*—free advertising that Luce papers rarely give their competitors). Stephen is nearly failing in geometry; he goes steady; he eases through a course in typing. He is the school's star swimmer and a leader in student affairs; he spends his spare time leading prayers as student council chaplain ("students are hushed, reverent") and doing the Rockin' Cha with his steady at the YMCA; and he wasted four hours a week for two months rehearsing for the YMCA centennial.

No doubt this is profitable journalism; it is defensible in that it focuses public attention on a vital problem. But it is no service to focus attention and at the same time to drop belladonna into the eyes. There are differences between Russian and American schools that *Life* blurs. For example: "Though Alexei gets no direct political indoctrination in school, he is constantly reminded of his duties toward the state"—the neatest formulation for Soviet Russia since Henry Wallace coined the term "directed democracy." Russian schools, as everybody knows, are totally dominated by party politics. As *Life* bravely admits, "For a year after Stalin's death Russian schools stopped giving examinations in modern history, while the party rewrote texts."

In student body as well as ideology, Soviet schools are aristocratic schools. They educate chiefly the children of the oligarchy. *Life* does not specify which of the two kinds of Soviet high school Alexei attends. If he attends an academic high school, for which fees are charged that only the "new class" can afford, he may go directly to the university. If (as seems unlikely in view of the

Life, March 24 and 31, April 7 and 14, 1958.

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curriculum described) he attends a non-academic high school, where the poor can get scholarships, he has only one chance in seven of going on. In America both types of high school are free. Alexei's mother ("a cost-engineer") and his friend (who lives in "a comfortably furnished Moscow apartment") are of the ruling class. Stephen's father, a "painter and decorator," is not. Alexei represents education for selected members of a ruling class. Stephen represents education for everybody. Alexei is above average in his selected setting; Stephen is below average in his unselected setting. The comparison is illogical on nearly all possible counts, and the grinding of preconceived educational axes can be the only motive for drawing it.*

How to compete with the Russian schools is of course a serious question, to which I wish to return. But I cannot promise as simple an answer as appears in the *Life* article following the rigged bout between Alexei and Stephen. Here the sound of axe-grinding snarls through Sloan Wilson's phrasing, "John Dewey and his disciples, who invented some of the silliest language ever heard"; his animadversions on the teaching of dancing, driving, woodworking, marriage, chorus, and the "advertising arts"; and his conclusion, "It is time to close the carnival and go to work."

*Ernest van den Haag sums up the differences between Russian and American school population thus: "1) Education is far less widespread in the Soviet Union than in the United States; 2) the selection of students to be educated is based to a far greater extent on irrelevant discriminations in the Soviet Union (in terms of financial ability, political belief and economic class origin) than is the case in the United States, where a high school education does not require the payment of fees, and where a college education can be obtained for much lower fees—relative to income—than in the Soviet Union (despite discrimination the chance of a Negro sharecropper's son in the U.S. to acquire secondary and higher education is far greater than that of the son of the average Soviet worker or farmer); 3) while the United States has moved in the direction of more education and less irrelevant discrimination in access to education, the Soviet Union has moved in the opposite direction."—Ernest van den Haag, *Education as an Industry*, Augustus Kelley, New York 1956.

Other educational reactions to Sputnik—and the press has been full of them for half a year—have been less slick, often more thoughtful, but no less vigorous. At a conference in Washington in March, Dr. James Killian, the President's Special Assistant on Science and Technology, spoke strongly for the need "to elevate standards of performance and enlarge the intellectual content of the secondary school program," and not only in the sciences. He emphasized the dangers to the nation inherent in "the mucker pose," the anti-intellectual attitude. Dr. Merle Tuve, of the Carnegie Institution in Washington, attacked the decline in esteem suffered by the teacher, and the frittering away of his time on petty activities and meetings that keep him from pursuing true scholarship and thus from regaining his lost esteem in the community. Admiral Hyman Rickover, belligerent progenitor of the "Nautilus," emitted a general roar at "the Dewey-Kilpatrick experimentalist philosophy" and demanded that our schools give factual knowledge and intellectual training and turn back to the home the job of teaching young people how to be pleasant and get along with others. He contrasted American schools unfavorably with the Dutch, which run longer per day, per week, and per year, and teach more to and demand more of the students. He ended with the now orthodox anathema against driver training and a schismatic one against school print shops.†

Somewhat the same line was taken, but more reasonably, by Adlai Stevenson in the *New York Times Magazine* for April 6. Besides hoping that schools would allow the home to teach driving and would concentrate on "some things that are more important, or at least harder to teach," he would like to see the home set standards of "respect

†Being acquainted with a high-school print shop, I happen to know that there are few spots in a high school more attractive to alert intellects, more productive of disinterested craftsmanship and learning, or more stimulating toward careers as diverse as literature, journalism, law, engineering, and mathematics. But Admiral Rickover is a scientist, and scientists are not required to make sense outside their special fields.

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for work and effort" and "delight in all manner of excellence." The "adjustment to life" that schools set out to teach should not mean, as it seems to mean, adjustment to family, community, people; adjustment to life should mean the arduously attained understanding of an interrelated, politically hazardous, and technologically complex world. That Mr. Stevenson's tone and suggestions were far from Admiral Rickover's ideal of Schools for Yesterday's Europe, however, appears in the following: "The schools can't teach children all there is to know. . . . But the schools can do a very great deal to teach children that their own ideas are good and worth having and expressing, even in the face of disagreement."

WITHIN the teaching profession as well as outside it, the reaction of each person to Sputnik has been predictable from his previous utterances. Those who belabored the schools before do so now; those who were generally happy about the schools are no less happy now—except that, they say, Sputnik shows we must appropriate more money for everything. Many teachers and administrators feel that we should not be "stampeded by Sputnik" into "rash innovations." Some of them feel, in fact, resentful of the increased pressure put on them; they do not want to become "a part of the war hysteria" —a defense of the status quo that seems as much political as educational. It may be no exaggeration to say that the profession views Sputnik just as it did World War II—everybody should do what he has been doing, but do it better; do more things for more people; pay more attention to gifted children, but be more understanding of the others; teach more mathematics and science, without neglecting the humanities. The program of the Sputnik-centered school is to be a slight emendation of Sam Gompers—*more,* except for driver training.

Amid such confusion a few clear and sensible voices are heard. One of these* is Paul Woodring, whose *Let's Talk Sense About Our Schools* was notable, a few years ago, for intelligence and balance at a time when Lynd, Fuller, and Smith stultified a few valid objections to American education with irrational emphasis and distortion amounting to *odium theologicum.*

Now in *A Fourth of a Nation*† Dr. Woodring has provided a masterly summary of the educational controversy of our times and has made two revolutionary proposals on curriculum reform and the training of teachers. His account of the "classical thesis" and the "progressive antithesis," together with his proposed synthesis, deserves the attention of any reader more interested in being informed than in merely choosing sides and rushing into battle. Unfortunately there is space here only to commend his lucidity of thought and style and to touch on some of his concrete suggestions.

The fate of the "upper third" of American students is of particular concern to Dr. Woodring. Though his book was published before Sputnik, he provides an effective answer to *Life* and Admiral Rickover. Dr. Woodring ridicules comparison of European and American schools. Of course the European student is ahead of the American student of like age—the European student represents a selected third, or tenth; the American student represents everybody. Dr. Woodring agrees with the American ideal of educating all students through high school, but he is emphatic in his recommendation that they be grouped by ability and the ablest be pushed ahead farther and faster. The social arguments often adduced against such selection he discounts, since accelerated students in large schools will always have the company of their peers. The selection should be made, however, by the schools; "at present the choice [of an academic rather than a vocational program] is made much more often on the basis of parental expectation or of family income than upon learning capacity." As to the apprehension that such grouping is undemocratic, "Such a fear," he

*Another is Professor H. S. Commager, whose essay "Victims of Success" (*Saturday Review,* May 3, 1958) judiciously balances the astonishing achievements and unsolved problems of American education.

†McGraw-Hill, 255 pp., $4.50.

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says, "borders on hypochondria. . . . If we ever have an elite, it is not likely to be an intellectual one."

Dr. Woodring's proposed reorganization of the curriculum is based on a two-speed system: at the age of seven, or seven and a half, the faster students would proceed from an ungraded primary school, roughly the equivalent of our kindergarten and the first two grades, into the four grades of an elementary school. At eleven or twelve they would go into a three-year high school and thence to a four-year college. They would be ready for graduate or professional schools at nineteen.

Slower students, who would be grouped with the faster ones of their age and social maturity in home rooms and extracurricular activities, would proceed generally two years behind, ending their two or three years of high school at sixteen or seventeen. They would then go to work or to junior college or trade school. Dr. Woodring envisages this system as flexible enough to take care of the student who is, for example, good in mathematics and weak in literature. Such a student would take part of his work in one sequence and part in another. The program obviously is suitable only to large schools with competent guidance, but these—consolidated schools or school systems—are becoming more and more the rule in America.

As an equally important corollary, Dr. Woodring would reorganize teacher-training, requiring all teachers to go through his reconstituted liberal arts colleges and then a two-year course leading to a teaching degree. Until such reorganization has come about, however, he is willing to settle for the five-year program (college plus one year of graduate work and apprentice teaching) now being experimentally tried in a number of colleges, with subsidies from the Fund for the Advancement of Education.

Dr. Woodring's plan, even if wholly sound, is sure to encounter the objection that it would involve enormous change and expense. A somewhat similar plan, however, to which this objection is less valid, has been offered by James Bryant Conant, former president of Harvard, who has been conducting a survey of American high schools for the Carnegie Corporation.

Dr. Conant's proposal, sketchily pictured in *Life*, has the merit of being a composite of actual practices. He suggests three main sequences, for the bright, the average, and the slow student. The bright student is not accelerated, but by the time he has finished high school his work is wholly on the college level in mathematics, science, and language; his destination is obviously college. The average student follows a solid but less advanced academic course with considerable vocational training, leading perhaps to business or highly skilled labor ("building contractor" is *Life*'s example). The slow student pursues simplified general studies and basic shop courses and is headed for semi-skilled or skilled labor. All three groups come together for home room, extracurricular activities, typing, mechanical drawing, music, and twelfth-grade social studies. The plan is most appropriate for large, comprehensive high schools, many of which already exist and more of which are being consolidated from small and inadequate schools—a policy Dr. Conant recommends. No provision seems to be made for driver training, even for the boy who is graduating to "Joe's Garage." Presumably his fellow garage attendants will teach him the requisite ruthlessness toward man and machine.

HOWEVER attractive such proposals as Dr. Woodring's and Dr. Conant's may be, it will be hard to adopt them widely in the near future. Education is one of America's largest industries, with a tremendous investment in a plant whose function cannot be quickly changed; we cannot close down the industry for re-tooling; it suffers from a chronic labor shortage; its labor is highly skilled and relatively inflexible in skill; and training new workers is slow and costly. The most serious shortage is in the college—the final assembly line from which roll the Sputnik-builders—for here labor is most departmentalized and takes longest to train.

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You can build a college in a year, amass a library for it in five, and get a good faculty in ten—but only assuming that you have more money than your competitors. At that, you will not have alleviated the college shortage, since you will have raided other colleges for your professors.

In view of this shortage, the President's Committee on Education Beyond the High School last year urgently recommended the doubling of all college faculty pay and the eventual trebling of total expenditure for colleges and universities. The money was apparently to come from industry and business, private donors, and Federal aid for buildings, scholarships, and research. Presumably this is a necessary recommendation, but most observers are pessimistic about its chances, since even the recommending committee was squeezed for funds by Congress. Federal aid, moreover, inevitably runs into difficulties of principle and politics over the questions of integration and subsidy to religious institutions.

Perhaps to most people's surprise, scholarships—private, industrial, or Federal—will not go very far to solve the problem of the reasonably able but impoverished student. Most scholarships, even fat ones, help only the middle class.* Very few enable a student wholly without resources to go to college; there are many such students; and such scholarships are available only to nearly flawless performers. They must be tops not in one but in all academic areas; they must also be "well-adjusted" and "leaders." It is very rare that a student needing heavy financial aid will have the gregarious suavity, the optimistic zeal in often trifling activities, and the unfocused and hence evenly manifested brilliance now required of a big-money examination-killer. Charles Steinmetz would have had too meager a record in extracurricular affairs. Robert Frost would have been too untrustworthy as an off-beat humorist to win a big national scholarship.†

SCHOLARSHIP aid does not meet and is not likely to meet the need. Yet higher education is demonstrably related to increased earning capacity. An investment of about $9,000 in a college education (the cost in 1949 of fees and maintenance, less the amount for maintenance for four years in any case, and plus the amount that could be earned in four years without a college education) would result in an expected lifetime income about $100,000 greater than for the non-college person.** Nine thousand dollars invested in government bonds would yield only $15,000 in a lifetime; the yield and the capital together, $24,000, are only a quarter of the mean yield of a like outlay on college. So profitable and safe an investment should be a reasonable basis for a loan.

Funds available for loans to college students, it is often and correctly stated, are not used to anywhere near capacity. Yet it is overlooked that such loans are usually for a hundred dollars or so—at most an amount in the hundreds. These are useful only for

*Actual figures are both embarrassing and depressing. "The income of the parents of male applicants [for scholarships in 1954-5 through the College Scholarship Service] averaged about $6,800 per year, while the parents of female applicants averaged $7,500." These incomes, of course, are far above the median for the nation. "Lack of any family offer [i.e., inability of the applicant's family to pay anything at all toward his college education] is more of a deterrent to receiving a college offer than evidence of willingness to pay all or a sizable portion of the expenses. The fact that large offers are hard, if not impossible, for most colleges to make lies behind a statement made by many scholarship officers: 'We didn't offer him anything; his need was just too great.'"—Rexford G. Moon, Jr., "Financial Aid—from Application to Award," *College Board Review*, Winter 1957.

†The scholarship committees would be right, too. Neither man could be considered successful in later life, since Steinmetz never became socially well adjusted and Frost failed to finish not one but two colleges.

**Figures are taken from Paul C. Glick and Herman P. Miller, "Educational Level and Potential Income," *College Board Review*, Winter 1957. The authors are statisticians of the United States Bureau of the Census. It should be noted, however, that these are mean figures. Other writers have shown that the much higher income expectation from longer education is lumped at the top of the academic scale. Students who do poor college work do not generally reach the normal expectation of increased income.

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unforeseen emergencies encountered by students normally able to pay their way. The others need to borrow in the thousands and can repay only over a period of years after graduation. In *Education as an Industry,* an astute and closely reasoned book, Ernest van den Haag argues that a revolving fund set up by colleges to aid such students would in the long run cost the colleges nothing and would bring enormous social and economic advantages to the nation. Certainly his plan, though so daring as to terrify many economists and most educators, would put a larger number of reasonably capable students through college than could the most grandiose—and still grossly inadequate—current plans for scholarship aid.

The question of numbers is not peripheral but central. For more students must go to college to become the teachers to staff colleges and schools—not to mention the scientists and engineers and executives to run society, launch moons, and otherwise compete with the Russians.

To meet the situation, both school and college will have to institute numerous piecemeal reforms, and extensions of current practices, rather than a single sweeping revolution. To increase opportunities in higher education, we may be forced to keep colleges open the year round (Oberlin College has proposed two quarters of teaching, one of study, and one of vacation, enabling the same number of teachers to carry twice as many students); to increase college size and enrollment; to set up more junior colleges and local colleges; to make existing junior colleges more demanding intellectually; to make some use of television and (the forgotten medium) radio; to use increased competition for admission to a favored few colleges as a means of elevating standards in all; to make better use of the oldest "visual aid"—books—as an alternative to the lecture system, which was the medieval substitute for books; and somehow to find money to pay professors well and so keep able men from drifting into business and industry.*

With the aid of both major and minor reforms, the American colleges may be able to turn out a sufficiently large number of well-trained young people. Yet it would be a pity if we did not use the emergency also as an opportunity to examine and improve the colleges. The hand of vocationalism, as has been observed by critics as far apart as William H. Whyte, Jr., and Robert M. Hutchins, is far too heavy on the curriculum. The best engineering schools are now, perhaps too late, becoming concerned with the literacy and cultural sophistication of their students. And professors of the humanities are desperately striving to keep their few islands of culture in the liberal-arts colleges from being washed away by the rising tide of "business majors" and other quasi-vocational courses, most of which are of very dubious value even in training for any known vocation.

Perhaps as important as curricular reform, however, is the attitude of administrators and admissions officers toward eccentric and original students and applicants. Colleges today are entirely too successful in molding boys into organization men. College presidents orate publicly on the need for brains and original thought; but their colleges officially foster all kinds of activities, innocent but inconsequential campus affairs as well as the insanity of big-time "amateur" athletics and the barbarous snobbery of fraternities, that have nothing to do with this need except perhaps to make it worse.

Waste is another matter. Some waste is inevitable. All leisure classes throughout history are prodigally wasteful of time and

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*"The plain fact is," says the President's Committee on Education Beyond the High School, "that the college teachers of the United States, through their inadequate salaries, are subsidizing the education of students . . . by an amount which is more than double the grand total of alumni gifts and endowment income of all colleges and universities combined. This is tantamount to the largest scholarship program in world history." A *fortiori,* of course, elementary and high-school teachers are making a similarly munificent and involuntary gift to the nation's taxpayers.

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energy; culture is a by-product of waste. And our college students are our leisure class. They will waste their time and energy having fun, and some of the fun will be cultural; but they are capable of their own waste without the help of the administration.

To attack the American undergraduate for this waste is futile. Other notably successful educational systems have paralleled the waste, and not to recognize the parallel is mere literal-mindedness. Nineteenth-century Oxford and Cambridge performed miracles of elegant indolence. For every Arnold or Clerk-Maxwell or Housman there were a hundred passmen who rode to hounds or otherwise went to the dogs. Modern Russia also has its leisure class, but its waste is organized—in meetings, agitation, ritual speeches and applause, ideological tightrope-walking, heresy-sniffing, and state-directed murder. This kind of leisure activity the Russian student, with humorless intensity, learns by doing. Our students prefer athletics, college radio stations and newspapers, beer, music, and bull-sessions.

Contrary to public belief, there is as yet no real college shortage. There is enormously increased competition for admission to some thirty or fifty well-known colleges and universities, but there are many times that number of intellectually respectable colleges still in need of capable students. Within a few years all good colleges *may* be full of good students, and it will then be necessary to improve the colleges that are not good. This is really what the shouting is about. But in the meantime the problem is being artificially aggravated by the insistence of many well-to-do non-students (or of their parents) on college, the willingness of many admissions officers to take them, and the irrelevance of some of the criteria for admission. Admissions officers have become—like the rest of us—highly sophisticated in amateur psychiatry. They (and we) are quick to spot and reject the deviant, to reward the well-adjusted, to confuse a knowing eye for the main chance with emotional maturity. Young people are sheep-like enough without being coached and trimmed from lambhood into well-rounded muttonheads. We need to take chances on ill-kempt, angular goats, hoping that some of them may launch literal or figurative Sputniks.*

There is no real college shortage yet. But there ought to be. Paradoxically, one measure of our success in primary and secondary education will be the extent and gravity of the college shortage. If the annual crop of 200,000 able but impoverished students were suddenly given the money for college, the crisis would be upon us now. If the ablest third of our high-school population were trained up to its capacity, it would need and demand more good colleges than we have now. To try to send more than half our high-school population to college, however, to extend the American expectation of universal education from twelve to sixteen years, is in my opinion impossible within the foreseeable future and undesirable at any time. We must simply do the best we can—by more rational selection of college students, by all kinds of scholarships and loans, by raising faculty pay, by improving methods of college teaching, by re-emphasizing the liberal arts and sciences and de-emphasizing vocational courses—to limit our colleges to the appropriate kind of student (who will still be there in overwhelming number) and to staff them with enough capable teachers. With luck and judgment, we may come within hailing distance of success. But the crisis is too big to be met with only one idea or gadget.

Likewise in the high school we are doomed if we look for a panacea. The past failure of American education is that it achieved universality at the cost of thinness. But before we listen to the roars of the axe-grinders, and before we angrily curse the still-active ghost of John Dewey (merely our best educational philosopher and one of the

*The effect of the objective, multiple-choice, or little-block-filling type of examination is as chilling to contemplate as the search for the inoffensive personality. But this is too big a subject to go into here.

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greatest minds of our time), we might soberly contemplate a single piece of evidence. "Everybody knows"—and conservatives wail in anguish—that "nobody studies Latin any more." But today Latin is studied by more American youngsters of high-school age than in 1890; and the *percentage* of Latinists in the high-school-age population has *risen* from 4.3 to 4.9.* The reason: universal high-school education, unprecedented and impossible, no doubt, but achieved and American.

The scientific, technological, military, and political crisis demands trained minds. I think it is possible to secure them without sacrificing the advantage of universal education—but not with a single blueprint for every school and a single solution for all teaching problems. Some sort of Conant-Woodring plan, involving two, three, or more paths through school, is in the long run unavoidable. Nevertheless these programs will bring more problems with them.

For instance, we have never solved the difficulty of providing a decent "terminal education" in the high school for the student unable or unwilling to go on. Dr. Hutchins would teach him the Great Books. I'd like to see him do it; college teachers in general and Dr. Hutchins in particular have no conception of how to teach a really low IQ; they have never had to try. Yet the Conant-Woodring plans, it seems to me, contemplate far too calmly a vocationally oriented, culturally stunted curriculum. And neither Dr. Conant nor Dr. Woodring has considered the cruel pressures that would be put on average or below-average children by middle-class parents ambitious for them to undertake an accelerated program. In schools abroad, the evils of early discrimination among children's abilities, the crucial examinations at the age of eleven, the intolerable strain on moderately able adolescents, have led England, France, and even Russia to question results achieved at such cost. There is no point in importing diseases: we have enough of our own without infecting every tot with a fevered ambition for a career to which high marks are the only path.

Good schools demand good teachers. More college graduates—in both absolute and relative numbers—are going into teaching than ever before. But what are these among so many? The numbers do not come near matching the need. We might get more teachers if teachers enjoyed enhanced prestige and encountered less overwork. But in these matters the best schools are as guilty as the worst. True, a good teacher must be a guide and friend; he is too often encouraged to be nursemaid and probation officer and family counselor; and he is rarely encouraged to be (within the limits of his subject, the age of his pupils, and his own intellect) a philosopher and scholar. Endless meetings with parents and educators, bales of paper work and reports and surveys, each purporting to streamline the educational system and achieving only more plastic tailfins and chromium grillwork, busy-work to feed the administrative ego, and chaperonage of student activities better abolished or allowed to run themselves—these hardly promote any philosophy but cynicism, or any scholarship but Parkinson's Law.

Scholarship, however, will carry little prestige in America unless it is well paid. And recruiting partly trained housewives for stop-gap "teachers' aides" to do the paper- and busy-work has been proved unnecessary in school systems where salaries are raised enough to attract teachers.† The average American teacher (salary $4,055) must work on other jobs evenings, week ends, or vacations, or all three, to make ends meet. The Federal government, including the President, has stood on the safe side of the line talking. Any other industry as large and vital as education would have enjoyed a major strike long ago. But despite

*New York *Times*, March 2, 1958. But lest any discouraged classicist be tempted to cheer at this unexpected ray of hope, I must add that the subhead reads, "Tempera Mutantur." QED for both sides.

†Marie L. Caylor, *op. cit.*

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the efforts of the American Federation of Teachers the industry remains unorganized; and even the AFT does not favor strikes, since the children suffer (a most un-labor-like sentimentalism: the consumer suffers in every strike). Thus teachers have been striking in the only way open to them—by leaving the profession if they get the chance. A widely advocated lure, merit pay, or extra salary for special competence, is anathema to teachers' organizations, since it can be used administratively to cow independence, originality, or intelligence. But good administration will not use it so, and bad administration can be fired. The shortage is of teachers, not administrators.

The very real dangers in merit pay would be minimized if *all* salaries were raised. Such a desideratum can be achieved only by the Federal government—in spite of manifold objections, partly valid but mostly political. As a starter, I would recommend that all income from teaching be tax exempt. The legislation would be reasonably simple, the cost perhaps $1 billion a year, and the result a massive economic pump-priming by goods-hungry teachers' families. The argument that teachers would thereby become second-class citizens seems to me disingenuous: they have been so for so long that, like the aged and the blind, they might well enjoy some of the benefits. But this is only a starter. I cannot see how our teacher shortage can be met without doubling teachers' salaries. That will certainly cost more than a billion.

THE time has come to state a few simple educational laws: 1) Education costs money. Though expense does not guarantee success, more and better education always costs more. 2) American education has not so much progressed as yawed wildly from one extreme to another. Let us tack, if necessary, but not yaw. Many of our schools, in David Riesman's phrase, are still "correcting for deficiencies of an earlier day." The conservative critics may charitably be said to be over-compensating for an over-correction. But the real axe-grinders are venting their religious or philosophical rage at Dewey's destruction of their pet absolutes. Hence they try to behead the schools under the pretext of giving them a haircut. 3) All schools make mistakes. The bitterness of almost every debate on education attests nearly universal ignorance of this truth. 4) American education has grown by crazy accretion. We always add and never purposefully discard. The schools are already trying to do too much. Therefore let us never add anything without inspecting and discarding at least two other things.

Should we then acquiesce in the loud campaign to drop alleged trivia, beginning with driver training? Not without more sober examination than any axe-grinder condescends to make. To strip the curriculum of "frills" is plausible economy. If they really are frills, it is wisdom. But it is both costly and stupid if in so doing we destroy opportunities for aesthetic experience, for originality, for the amassing of apparently useless information, for experiment and vitality through recreation, for independence of judgment. These are necessary to all children, especially the ablest, if we are to have trained, resourceful minds and sturdy personalities to meet the scientific and political crisis. Those who shout, "Down with Dewey and driver training," besides demonstrating incompetence through inability to make distinctions, are unwittingly making a colossal task impossible.

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HOW FREE IS SOVIET SCIENCE?

Technology under Totalitarianism

LEOPOLD LABEDZ

NOW that the initial reaction to the Sputniks has worn off, it may be worthwhile taking a glance at Soviet scientific and technological achievement in the longer perspective.

Most of the discussion in the West has so far centered on the achievements of Soviet science and education, rather than on the prospects of space exploration. Fear of the military threat implicit in these achievements is balanced by hope that the increased prestige of science in Soviet society will make for greater rationality and perhaps even undermine the totalitarian structure of the dictatorship. Figures concerning the number of scientists and engineers turned out yearly by Soviet schools and universities have suddenly become a subject of general interest and concern, resulting in all sorts of wild comparisons. While previously Soviet technological progress was ignored, the Sputniks have by now generated fear, so that even some of the more ridiculous claims of Soviet propaganda have gained currency.

The public was evidently caught unprepared for the event; and yet there was really no reason for surprise. It had been known for years that, alongside heavy industry, Soviet policy has consistently given priority to technological education, that science gets preferential treatment as long as it does not clash with Communist ideology, and that Soviet scientists are showered with privileges, high incomes, and considerable prestige. It was also known that Soviet scientists had achieved considerable successes in the realm of military technology (notably jet aircraft), that in the field of thermonuclear reactions they had already caught up with America in 1953, and that their attitude toward basic research differed from that of Mr. Charles Wilson. Even the earth satellite itself was clearly foreshadowed in the Soviet press, which last year gave particular prominence to the centenary of the "grandfather of the Sputnik," K. E. Tsiolkovsky. On the eve of the launching, the review *Oktyabr* (September 1957) wrote, "There is intensive preparation going on for launching artificial earth satellites."

Western attitudes throughout this period were characterized by incredulity as to the potentialities of Soviet science and technology. This was not simply the result of ignorance, nor was it primarily determined by the traditional stereotypes of "Russian backwardness." The operative factor was rather a belief that totalitarianism was "killing" science. In this respect Lysenko did more harm to Western ballistics than to Soviet biology, for he encouraged skepticism in the West as to the position of science in a totalitarian state. The Lysenko affair from the start led to certain misconceptions concerning the "death of science in Soviet Russia." Details were represented as the whole picture. Oversimplified dichotomies concerning freedom and scientific efficiency, vague assertions about the incompatibility of totalitarianism and fundamental research, provided an excuse for complacency. It is not only in the Communist countries that ideological fervor has a distorting effect on public opinion.

THREE Sputniks have shaken Western complacency about Soviet science, but now there is danger of falling into the opposite extreme, according to a well-known student of Soviet affairs who here makes his debut in COMMENTARY. LEOPOLD LABEDZ, a Polish-born sociologist, is now resident in London, where he is at work on a major study in political science. He is one of the editors of *Soviet Survey*, a periodical dealing with Soviet affairs.

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Whatever the political system, science is not easily extinguishable in modern industrial society. The "Aryanization" of physics cost Hitler Germany a great deal, but did not prevent her from achieving remarkable technological results. Stalin's great purge in the 30's certainly affected the Soviet scientific elite. (It also decimated the military elite, but that did not prevent later successes by the Soviet army.) But although Soviet scientists were suffering from political persecution, and research was harassed, the consequences did not affect all branches of science uniformly, and the continuity of research and teaching was only broken sporadically.

Two factors seem to have been overlooked in the general indignation about the persecution of Russian scientists and the practice of deciding scientific controversies by decree. One is that the regime was often ready to "rehabilitate" imprisoned scientists, when the need for their services was realized. Some of the most eminent names among Soviet scientists come to mind: Professor Ramzin, the chief defendant in the celebrated "wreckers" trial of the so-called Industrial party in 1930, was later released from prison, became the head of the Institute of Thermodynamics, and eventually (in the early 40's) received a Stalin Prize for his work. A. N. Tupolev, the aircraft designer, though imprisoned in the 30's, was later reinstated and contributed greatly to the development of Soviet air power; he designed the TU 104 and TU 114 jet airliners, and in 1956, as an Academician and Stalin Prize winner, accompanied Khrushchev on his visit to Britain. L. D. Landau, the child prodigy of Soviet physics, was also persecuted during the Great Purge in 1936-38, but later organized a remarkable school of theoretical physics around him. Such examples, which can be multiplied, tended to be disregarded in the justifiable indignation over the fate of Vavilov and other biologists.

The second point is more paradoxical and is connected with the unintended consequences of political actions. It has often been maintained that the purge greatly harmed the Soviet military performance in the last war. It is arguable, however, that its effects were not entirely one-sided. A good deal of dead wood may well have been incidentally cut out during that operation. It is indeed more than probable that had the veteran Marshal Budenny, for example, been included among the victims of the purge, the early Soviet operations in the Ukraine in 1941 would have been conducted more effectively. In general, the more experienced senior officers, who were replaced in the purge by younger commanders, might have found it more difficult to adjust themselves to the conditions of modern warfare. It is difficult to say whether the loss in experience was counterbalanced by the gain in adaptability, but the balance sheet is certainly incomplete without taking into account the unintended assets as well as the known liabilities. The same applies to science, where one can also detect some paradoxical consequences of the purges, although in this case they were, of course, more detrimental, since science depends to a greater degree on continuity and past experience. Even so, the commonly accepted picture is incomplete. The mechanism of the purge is more generally apprehended than its various social consequences, including those affecting science.

An example may serve as illustration. In Czarist Russia the study of both mathematics and statistics had been on a very high level, and during the 20's Soviet statisticians continued the tradition of their predecessors. The Moscow Institute of Current Research became a flourishing center of statistical investigations. At the beginning of the planning era, in 1929-30, the Institute was abolished and its head, Professor N. D. Kondratyev, and most of his colleagues were purged because they refused to juggle with statistics. Ever since, Soviet statisticians have been in trouble. Theirs was a delicate subject which, on the practical plane, involved dealing with data concerning the rate of investment and other touchy subjects. The demographic effects of forcible industrial-

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ization and political purges were another painful topic. In 1937 the population census was suppressed, the directors of the Census Bureau were executed as "enemies of the people," and many statisticians were arrested. In 1949-50 there came another wave of persecution of statisticians, who were told that they did not conform to the "class character of statistics" and were not sufficiently "party-conscious." Here was what seemed like a perfect example of a process on which a Western author at the time made the following comment:

> Since science is to some extent an interconnected web of activities and theories, the several parts stimulating or retarding one another, political control of even a few areas of science may diffuse its harmful effects to other areas. . . . Scientific fanatics and quacks—men like Lysenko in genetics—take over when political authority demands what competent scientists cannot conscientiously give it—particular substantive theories or results on order. Where scientific authority is endangered or destroyed, competent men fear to take a position on scientific theory itself, for the demands of political authority are changeful and make almost any position insubstantial. Even further, in such a situation, competent men avoid a scientific career altogether. In all societies, men seek a *relatively* "safe" occupational career. A "flight from science," perhaps only to the more applied branches of scientific technology, as was the case in Nazi Germany, may be one of the unintended consequences of the extension of political control of science in Russia.*

What really happened in Russia did not quite conform to this pattern. No doubt immense harm resulted from the rigidity of the system, doctrinaire dogmatism, the terror, isolation from the outside world, and the rest of the totalitarian set-up. But there was certainly no "flight from science." A scientific career was, and still is, immensely attractive to Soviet youth, and the risks involved were not greater than in other occupations. According to the Soviet Statistical Yearbook, the number of scientific workers increased from 98,000 to 224,000 between 1940 and 1955, and to 240,000 by 1957 (*Vestnik Akademii Nauk,* No. 10, 1957). Nor was the element of relative "safety" negatively correlated with "pure science," and positively with applied science. The situation was less simple. It is true that the terror produced a flight from danger zones, but the risk was unevenly distributed in different fields at different times, and the party line *on science* was often dictated by a strange mixture of ideological and pragmatic considerations. Its unintended consequences were not always one-sided. Thus, while it suppressed statistics, it did not prevent mathematicians from pursuing that abstract and innocent game, the theory of probability. To be sure, in 1949 the statisticians were condemned for supposing that their discipline could be based on that doctrine, and statistics was defined as a "social science based on Marxist-Leninist theory." But the mathematicians were left alone. The consequences can only be conjectured, but it is probable that when statistical investigations became more risky, potential students turned to mathematics. A sort of artificial natural selection must have been operative: what was lost in statistics was gained in mathematics. The Russians already had a fine tradition in the "probabilist" branch of mathematics, and this tradition was further developed during the Soviet period. A. N. Kolmogorov became a world authority on the subject, and the school of Soviet mathematical probabilists flourished, while the statisticians were prevented from using probability techniques in industry, to the obvious detriment of Soviet technology. But when in 1955 the Soviet leaders finally realized the potentialities of "quality control" techniques, Bulganin made an earnest appeal for their development in Soviet industry. Since during the quarter century when statisticians were being persecuted, mathematics had provided a refuge, the necessary cadres existed and could be trained to do the job without undue delay.

This case suggests the possibility that the flight from risks may sometimes have taken a direction other than that from pure to applied science. The case of cybernetics

*Bernard Barber, *Science and the Social Order* (Free Press), 1952, p. 82.

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likewise shows that the interconnection of scientific activities provides means for the partial absorption of political shocks. When cybernetics was first developed in the West, Soviet publications, particularly *Voprosy Filosofii,* ridiculed it as a utopian and anti-humanist attempt on the part of the decadent imperialists to replace men by machines. But when it dawned on the Soviet leaders that mechanical brains could provide immense advantages, and automation became a Soviet watchword, Norbert Wiener ceased to be a bogey-man and cybernetics was "rehabilitated." The neighboring fields of more abstract disciplines provided the men in this case too, and the first Soviet electronic counting machine (called BESM) was quickly built for the Soviet Academy of Sciences. *Voprosy Filosofii* now claimed that the proper development of cybernetics was only possible on the basis of Marxism-Leninism; popular pamphlets were produced to explain the significance of cybernetics and electronics under such slogans as "Let's look into the future"; and *Vestnik Akademii Nauk* claimed that a translating machine built in the Soviet Union was superior to any in the West!

All this is not to say that physicists are now free to pursue their studies without interference. Stern warnings still abound in the Soviet press that "in circumstances of acute ideological warfare, there can be no question of any kind of neutrality or non-participation in politics among Soviet scientists" (*Vestnik Akademii Nauk,* No. 10, 1957). And the organ of Agitprop gives examples of such participation; they consist of attending various seminars where the history of the party, and dialectical and historical materialism, are taught in a form especially adapted for scientists. The topics dealt with include: "The Achievements of Modern Cosmogony and Dialectical Materialism," "The Formation of a Materialist World Outlook while Teaching Physics," "The Inculcation of a Materialist World Outlook in Lectures on Natural Science," and so on (*V Pomoshch Politicheskomu Samoobrazovaniyu,* No. 3, 1958). But the same organ, which serves the cause of ideological instruction, indicates that the attendance at such *Politgramota* (i.e. political education) circles has been slack, and that "many of the engineers and technical workers have only a poor knowledge of the works of the classics of Marxism-Leninism." Attendance at such "ideological services," which waste the time and energy of technical and scientific cadres, has no doubt fallen off somewhat since Stalin's death. It is interesting to note that *Kommunist* (No. 1, 1958) pointed out that the number of hours devoted to the "social sciences" (i.e. Marxism-Leninism) at the Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology is lower than that devoted to "social sciences" (i.e. the humanities) at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. According to *Kommunist,* the figures are 496 and 960 hours, i.e. 23.3 per cent and 45.1 per cent of the curriculum, respectively. Even if the figures should be wrong, the emphasis is significant. (A Western comparison by Alexander G. Korol in *Soviet Education for Science and Technology* gives the opposite impression.)

It is common knowledge that since Stalin's death, Soviet scientists have been given more leeway in planning research regardless of State plans. The secretary of the Academy of Sciences, Professor A. V. Topchiev, stresses that after 1953 "a new stage in planning research" led to better results (*Vestnik Akademii Nauk,* No. 11, 1956). The allocation of research funds continues to be generous. According to *Pravda* (February 6, 1956) it was 13.6 billion roubles for that year, or 2.4 per cent of the estimated total budget. The Minister of Higher Education, V. Eliutin, has stated in *Pravda* that there are 767 university-level schools in the USSR (this includes institutions providing evening and correspondence courses) and that 260,000 specialists graduated from them in 1956-57, of whom 71,000 were engineers.* Among the higher educational establishments

*For an analysis of the problem of scientific and technological manpower, see: *Professional and Scientific Personnel in the USSR,* by Nicholas de Witt (Harvard University, 1956).

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179 are devoted to engineering and technology, while 138 are polytechnical institutes. All-round technical education is widespread, starting with the so-called "polytechnization" of teaching in the schools, and with 4,000 technical schools (*technikums*) giving technical training to graduates from secondary schools (*Vestnik Vysshey Shkoly*, No. 11, 1957). In general, Soviet scientists do not think that basic research is "something you are doing when you do not know what you are doing," to quote Mr. Charles Wilson's celebrated general (motors) definition. On the contrary, they insist that scientific research should not be restricted by the drive for immediate practical results. This is not always the view of the government, but it is interesting to note the words of the president of the Soviet Academy of Science, Professor A. N. Nesmeyanov, on the subject: "Science has all its roots in practice. Its fruits belong to practice. But the linking of science with practice must not be short-sighted. Often the results of abstract science, precisely because they are all-embracing, are more practical than the results of applied science" (*Vestnik Akademii Nauk*, No. 2, 1957).

The quality of Soviet natural science can, of course, only be assessed by specialists in the various disciplines, but it seems to vary from one field to another. It is in line with routine Soviet procedure that there is an exoteric and an esoteric view of it, one designated for mass propaganda, and the other for the initiated. The same Professor Nesmeyanov, who on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the revolution uniformly praised the achievements of the various branches of Soviet science in *Pravda* and *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, gave a different evaluation in the above-mentioned *Vestnik*, a periodical with a restricted scientific audience. There he indicated that Soviet science is strong in physics, theoretical mechanics, and mathematics; weaker in astronomy and chemistry; and weak or deficient in biology, geology, and certain technical disciplines. This is a more severe assessment than the one given by *Fortune* (No. 2, 1957). As to the "general sciences," by which the Russians mean philosophy, economics, history, literature, law, and languages, the Professor considers them below standard, and dismisses them in one sentence as "very patchy."

For propaganda purposes, Soviet publications are much less candid and eagerly seize upon any Western statement praising their efforts or achievements, while dismissing more critical assessments. Thus *Kommunist* noted with satisfaction the laudatory side of the estimate of Soviet science in the *Fortune* article, while dismissing all its other comments as malicious, false, and demagogic. Similarly, I. Kuzminov in *International Affairs* (No. 3, 1958) quoted with approval Dr. Libby's statement in an interview given to the *U.S. News and World Report* (August 1957) in which he "acknowledged the superiority of the Soviet Union in training scientific and technical personnel." But nothing is said about the problems now besetting Soviet higher education which shows some symptoms of over-expansion. In guarded words *Planovoe Khozyaistvo* (September 1957) intimated that a level has been reached which "permits at the present time the fulfillment of requirements for specialists . . . in all branches of the national economy and culture." As a result the number of specialists trained in the higher educational establishments shows a tendency to decline; this is most probably a deliberate policy, independent of the lower output of university candidates now graduating from secondary schools, who are fewer because they come from age-groups affected by the war deficiency in the birth rate. There also seem to be surpluses of specialists in some fields, while shortages still remain in others.*

Because of the over-expansion of the Soviet educational system (for uneven development is not confined to the capitalist economy), a new phenomenon has appeared in the Soviet economy: unemployment among the young. This will probably result (for other, more weighty, reasons too) in a certain shift in

*W. M. Matthews: "Youth Unemployment in the Soviet Union," unpublished manuscript, Oxford University.

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Soviet science, with greater emphasis being given to quality rather than quantity. Competition for admission to Soviet higher educational establishments is becoming fiercer, and entrance requirements are being raised, a phenomenon not confined to the Soviet Union. The result will be a further differentiation between various levels of technological education. A Western critic, Mr. A. G. Korol, has suggested that "when ultimately the Soviet people gain a decisive voice in the allocation of their intellectual and physical resources . . . their schools will produce better but fewer engineers." It would seem that this aim can be achieved without the Soviet people having a say in the matter, simply through the need to re-allocate manpower resources and to adjust the educational system to the march of economic development.

AN IMPORTANT consideration in analyzing Soviet science has to do with the nature of scientific work in general. Like other human activities, science has become a field of specialization, i.e. increased division of labor, on the basis of large-scale organization bureaucratically controlled, and is planned to a far greater degree than was the case previously. The administration of research and planned discovery, with laboratory assistants carrying out work previously done by the "stars"—all these characteristics of contemporary scientific work fit the general bureaucratic character of the Soviet system. The Soviet Academy of Sciences has become a gigantic organization planning, coordinating, and controlling scientific activities.* But contrary to a widespread notion, the problem of financing research does not differ fundamentally in the Soviet Union from the situation in other, less bureaucratic societies. It is only in the fields to which the government assigns first priority that finance ceases to be a problem. The multiplication of staffs in response to real or supposed organizational needs is indeed more accentuated in the USSR than in the Western countries. Another penalty of the bureaucratic organization of science—pseudo-research—is also not a Soviet monopoly, but it is magnified by totalitarian interference with scientific authority.

This last factor is the real crux of the matter in the prevalent Western criticisms of the Soviet attitude to science. Crucial it is, but perhaps not quite in the manner often supposed. Freedom of research may be an important value, but is not the only factor yielding results. The moral or political issue of the value of the individual is not to be confused with the factual problem of the indispensability of the individual scientist for the eventual outcome of research. Some scientists are irreplaceable, others are not. But in the long run all large-scale organizations disregard the former assumption. In terms of individual freedom, the lonely inventor, such as Lopatkin in Dudintsev's protest novel, *Not by Bread Alone,* gets all the sympathy; in terms of technological efficiency, the issue of his dialogue with the bureaucrat, Drozdov, is much less clear-cut. It may well be that there is some point in Drozdov's argument that improvements in pipe production can be more efficiently attained through the routine work of bureaucratically controlled organization than through the eccentric activities of an individual genius. In any case, since this Soviet novel shows that bureaucratic routine also includes stealing ideas, there is little room for argument so far as the efficiency of the system is concerned. That does not detract from the value of the individual or social protest embodied in Lopatkin, but the author may be thought to have confused the issue by presenting his hero's problem as ultimately dependent on the ideologically acceptable question of greater or lesser technological efficiency. The point was not lost on such Soviet critics as Surkov, who triumphantly counterposed the Sputnik to Lopatkin with his home-produced gas pipes.

All this is not to say that totalitarian inter-

*See Alexander Vucinich, *The Soviet Academy of Sciences* (Stanford University Press, 1956). The Academy now has 105 scientific research institutes in which more than 15,000 persons are employed (*Vestnik Akademii Nauk,* No. 10, 1957).

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ference with science is a negligible factor and that on balance regimented science is more effective than free science. As Stepan Dedijer has rightly observed, there are two specific factors which have to be taken into account in assessing Soviet scientific successes: "First, it is a very large country; and secondly, it started with a scientific tradition."* In this respect Sir Eric Ashby, who has made sober and timely pronouncements about the potentialities of Soviet science,† may well have underestimated the degree of harm done by what he himself called "the medieval technique of appeal to authority and indictment of heresy." Without the totalitarian strait-jacket, Russian science might well have developed faster. Yet the relationship of Soviet science to Communist ideology is a topic which has confused many analysts. The official case is, of course, that "the Sputniks are not only a demonstration of the tremendous possibilities inherent in the Socialist means of production. They are also a reaffirmation of the correctness of the Marxist-Leninist materialist philosophy."** As against such assertions, a Western critic, after a careful survey of various scientific disciplines in the Soviet Union, comes to the equally orthodox conclusion that "the close link between science and dialectical materialism exercises, if anything, a detrimental effect. . . . The great practical achievements in technology, therefore, have come to pass not *because* of the alliance between Soviet physical science and dialectical materialism but *in spite* of the entanglement of science with ideology."§

ONE can no doubt go on counterposing Soviet technological achievements to Soviet interference with scientific theory, but after a while this exercise becomes fruitless. It is evident that such interference has had a detrimental effect on Soviet achievements in many theoretical fields. The wrecking of genetics; the persecution of biologists like Vavilov, Zhrebak, and Orbeli for their "Morganist-Weissmanist" deviations; the Pavlovian stranglehold on psychology, with the resulting ban on psychoanalysis; the purge of Sergeyev and other medical research workers; and the long delay in recognizing the achievements of modern theoretical physics arising from the "idealistic" work of Einstein or Heisenberg—clearly show that Leninist ideology has had a stifling influence on the development of scientific theory in the Soviet Union. Professor Wetter is right in saying that the achievements have come in spite, and not because of, ideological entanglement. Yet, while the power of logic is not the same as the logic of power, neither is perfectly consistent in the real social context. The scientists are not absolutely dependent on the logic of the dialectical *Weltanschauung* in their work, nor are the *apparatchiki* ready to endanger their power by sticking to the logic of ideology, when they realize that to do so is inadvisable on pragmatic grounds. A given scientific theory is then permitted, and by a "creative development" Leninism is reinterpreted so that it becomes possible to claim that the two are not incompatible, but on the contrary that the newly accepted theory could be only developed on the basis of "the most progressive scientific ideology."

The scientists, on their part, are far from being ideal humanists of the Leonardo variety. Only a few are philosophically inclined. Most of them, like their counterparts in the West, know more and more about less and less. Indeed, they know even less about general ideas outside their province than their Western colleagues. If left in peace, very few would busy themselves with questions of the philosophy of science, an occupation pursued everywhere by philosophers rather than by scientists. As matters stand, top-ranking scientists can go about their affairs unconcerned about the compatibility of their notions with Marxism, provided that its

Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, September 1957.

†Eric Ashby, *Scientist in Russia* (London, 1947); see also B. H. Liddell Hart (Ed.), *The Soviet Army* (London, 1956, pp. 452-450).

**Prof. L. Ilyichov, in the journal *International Affairs* (Moscow, March 1958, p. 11).

§Prof. G. Wetter, in the periodical *Soviet Survey* (London, March 1958, p. 59).

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current interpretation does not interfere with their work. Some may accept its general ideas, not bothering about their consistency, while others may believe that dialectical materialism has no application to natural science, but that its scientific character has been demonstrated in the field of social analysis. In general, the "new Soviet intelligentsia" stands in vivid contrast to its predecessor, the pre-revolutionary Russian intelligentsia. It is, on the whole, narrow in outlook, unconcerned with general ideas, and displays all the usual traits connected with technical specialization and bureaucratic dependence. In the Soviet system, the old function of the intellectual has disappeared and his place has been taken by mental technicians. It is not the scientists or the engineers who display residual features of historical continuity, but the *literati* and the students, whose impetus, however, is spent when they are drawn into the administrative routine of daily life, with all its personal worries. Under such conditions, the meaning of ideology for a technical expert may remain ambiguous if its content does not clash too obviously with his interests. Even in its Stalinist or Khrushchevian form it may serve the function attributed by Max Weber to all religions and ideologies: to "make sense" of the world as a total experience.

In this respect "Marxist" ideology, in its Sovietized form, is peculiarly suitable for narrow specialists: it provides them with a *Weltanschauung*, a substitute for religion, in which science is worshipped, and which also satisfies the same need for a mind squeezed by specialization that "primitive magic" did for less sophisticated brains. Its value for a generally critical outlook can be exaggerated. Max Weber has argued that the "magical image of the world" prevented the emergence of science in China, while Protestantism was particularly consonant with scientific activity because of its stress on rationalism and empiricism. Others have narrowed down the beneficial influence of Protestantism on the emergence of science to one of its variants, Calvinism. Whatever the historical value of these propositions, they have little relevance to the totalitarian experience. "The magical image of the world" may have harmed, but did not preclude, scientific activity in Russia. With the industrialization of China, natural science will play a greater role there, though the Maoist outlook is hardly less "magical" than the Confucian. Yet both empiricism and rationalism (when they do not clash) perform a particular function in "scientific ideology": rationalism is reduced to the role of non-substantive or formal rationality; empiricism—to a peculiar type of pragmatic adjustment within dogmatic doctrinal limits. Ever since Engels, "dialectical pragmatists" have been fond of repeating that "the proof of the pudding is in the eating," but they usually behave as if the taste of the pudding is fixed once and for all. Yet the thesis that science is incompatible with totalitarianism is false as a factual proposition. If Calvinist theology can be considered to have been beneficial to science at a certain time, there is no reason why science cannot coexist (uneasily) with Communist doctrinairism. It has done so in the past, and the post-Stalinist reorientation has made some of the points of conflict less acute.

Another familiar thesis relevant to the problem of the Soviet political structure is that of the growing dependence of politicians on experts. Unmodified, it fits a contemporary totalitarian state even less than Max Weber's doctrines on the subject fitted Imperial Germany. The growing complexity of life and knowledge in modern society makes expert advice indispensable, but this does not lead to *political* dependence on experts. Generalities about industrialization, higher educational levels, and the growing aspirations of managerial strata, have been utilized since Stalin's death to render respectable hopeful forecasts about a democratic evolution of the regime, of which the collective leadership was to be a preliminary step.* Since then, the managers have been

*See Isaac Deutscher, *Russia After Stalin* (1953).

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hit by decentralization measures, and there is no more talk about collective leadership. As to the experts, Khrushchev may well hold with a 19th-century German petty despot, the Elector of Hanover, that, like professors and prostitutes, they can be found on every street corner. Their behavior clearly does not cause him much concern. They are competent, often justifiably proud of their achievements, intensely patriotic, and frequently display the same primitive arrogance so characteristic of Khrushchev himself, despite the fact that unlike him, they are not the products of *Rabfaks* (Workers' Colleges). Characteristic in this respect is a speech made by the leading Soviet atomic expert, Academician I. V. Kurchatov, whose lectures once caused such a stir at Britain's atomic power plant in Harwell. Speaking at the March 1958 session of the Supreme Soviet which also witnessed Khrushchev's formal assumption of supreme power, and answering President Eisenhower's message to Bulganin which stressed that the United States had not exploited its temporary monopoly of atomic arms, he asserted that "when the Soviet Union began to accumulate atomic weapons, there were so few in the United States that they could not play any serious role in a war. And hydrogen arms were first built in the USSR and not in the USA" (Pravda, April 1, 1958).

If it was unrealistic to suppose that state control of science would prevent the Soviet scientists from achieving spectacular results, it is equally unrealistic to expect that contacts with the West will appreciably affect their attitude towards the Soviet system. They have, of course, a stake in its rationalization and in the avoidance of excesses similar to those practiced in the past. But it is Western scientists who now pointedly remark that the difference in pay between a scientist and an unskilled worker is so much higher in the Soviet Union! If Semenov can study chemistry without bothering about the currently orthodox party line on the "theory of resonance," if Bogolubov, Alexandrov, and Fok can occupy themselves with mathematics, without relating it to dialectical materialism, if Kapitza, Blokhinstev, or Landau are able to pursue their researches in nuclear physics unconcerned with the philosophical implications of the indeterminacy principle—in short if the causes of scientific disaffection have been somewhat alleviated—there is no reason to be seen why Soviet scientists should not provide their government with efficient service.

The threat to ideology from the point of view of the regime does not come from the philosophical implications of the natural sciences, but from the humanities and the social sciences. This explains the contrast, often noticed by Western observers, between the levels of the natural and the social sciences in the Soviet Union. As a rule, the closer the subject is to sensitive ideological points, the smaller its chance of unfettered development. In this respect physics appears to be situated fairly far from the magnetic pole, while genetics and psychology are much closer, and sociology is almost on top of it. The hard core of the dogma is sensitive to independent research in these latter fields. While in medieval times Catholic theology was especially touchy about the findings of natural science which seemed to contradict its view of the universe, Communist ideology is particularly vulnerable to critical findings about social structure and development. Since it pretends to be *the* science of society, Soviet Marxism cannot be basically modified without undermining the position of its guardians.

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SUBURBAN JEWISH SUNDAY SCHOOL

A Report

THEODORE FRANKEL

THERE are no exact figures on the number of Jews who have migrated from the city into upper-income, and once largely exclusive, suburban Westchester County in the last decade, but people who ought to know estimate that they now constitute between 20 and 30 per cent of the total population. Since newer Jewish arrivals find the original residents less and less reluctant to sell, the percentage, whatever it is, may very well rise.

Westchester is just under an hour away from New York either by train or car for the manufacturers, lawyers, doctors, psychiatrists, and others who live there. To be sure, there are some middle-income people in the new apartment buildings and in the cheaper houses around White Plains, but the social tone is set by the wealthier groups. On every side in the gently rolling hills of the county, one sees their houses, complete with bay windows, flagstone terraces, and large, well-trimmed lawns. Since distances are considerable, whether for visiting, shopping, or commuting, the possession of two cars is often a necessity. Driving about the countryside on a Sunday morning, past the crowded fairways of the many golf clubs that are scattered throughout the area, one gets an impression of comfortable opulence from the very landscape—a feeling not diminished by the knowledge that initiation fees in the country clubs run as high as $10,000.

The Jews of Westchester County are integrated with the non-Jewish community to an extent undreamed of by their parents in Brooklyn and the Bronx (though of course many come from middle-class families which had already adapted themselves to the American environment). Their children go to Scarsdale's renowned public schools, take private lessons with ballet, violin, and piano teachers, are attended to by first-rate doctors and dentists, and mix with the "better element," both Jewish and Gentile, in the Boy and Girl Scouts and on the public playing fields. The parents, especially the mothers, are active in the PTA, on school boards, and in other civic enterprises, and if they find themselves barred from the fancier Gentile garden and golf clubs, they establish their own—which are just as fancy.

Local Jewish affairs, too, are organized well beyond the capacities of most congregations in New York. There are a number of new synagogues, temples, and centers, and formal affiliation, if not actual attendance, runs well above what one would expect from transplanted New Yorkers. But perhaps the most striking manifestation of the Jewish spirit in Westchester are the religious schools sponsored by the various congregations. And of these probably the best known, and certainly the largest, is the one run by the Jewish Community Center of White Plains (Reform), 60 per cent of whose membership (the name to the contrary notwithstanding) is recruited from Scarsdale, the rest coming from White Plains, Hartsdale, Harrison, and several other communities of Westchester.

I had been told that this school was considered one of the leaders in Reform religious education, and that it had pioneered important curricular innovations which had been widely discussed and accepted by other Jewish educators. I called Dr. Toby Kurzband, its educational director, and he offered to show me around. It was shortly after Passover. The following Sunday, at eight in the morning, he picked me up in Manhattan for my first trip to see the religious school in action.

THEODORE FRANKEL, who here describes at first-hand one of the most important Reform religious schools in America, was educated at Yeshiva University and Columbia, and spent some years teaching in a Talmud Torah. A former editor of COMMENTARY, Mr. Frankel is now in Europe working on a book about various social types in the new Germany.

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DR. KURZBAND is a topnotch administrator (he was elected as the first president of the National Association of Temple Educators some time ago), but he does not look the part. Though he must be close to fifty, his body is rangy and spare, and with his gray-green eyes, receding sandy hair, and pleasantly lined features, he resembles the kindly history teacher who doubles as football coach for the local high school. At the moment Dr. Kurzband is, in fact, chairman of the Art Department at Christopher Columbus High School in the Bronx, and his job in Westchester is nominally part time; but he has been in Jewish education for many years and the hours of effort he lavishes on the Sunday school add up to virtually a full-time job.

I had hardly settled back in the car when he handed me some reading material, typewritten or mimeographed on red, white, green, and blue paper. For the next three-quarters of an hour, while driving through the shabby purlieus of Manhattan and the Bronx and then along the green-bordered highways of Westchester, Dr. Kurzband discoursed on the history and development of the school. The first sheet I picked up, red in color and especially prepared for me, listed essential minimum information. The first item said: "Growth—300 pupils in 1946, now 1,300 in 1956." Kurzband explained to me that when he originally came to the school, there was only one Sunday session, but enrollment had increased so rapidly that the congregation had had to put up a new school building and only recently it had added another wing. "Our growth has been fantastic," Kurzband said, "and very gratifying, but for a long time it was accompanied by all sorts of growing pains. We've overcome most of them, but the school committee has recommended that enrollment stop at 1,500. Beyond that point a school becomes too impersonal and too unwieldy.

"The way it runs now,* we have 519 in the early session on Sunday and 548 in the late session. One hundred and thirty-eight pupils attend the Saturday session. Our classes, like those of most Reform Sunday schools, run from the first to the ninth grades. In addition, there is a monthly festival party for pre-school children, so that the children come to us from the time they're toddlers till they're confirmed at the age of fifteen. And now we have a post-confirmant program where a number of our confirmants return to us as assistant teachers. If we could only do as well with the parents, we'd really have something."

Kurzband went on to cover all the other topics listed on my red sheet with equal thoroughness. Reaching the item "Staff" he said, "We're particularly proud of our teachers, all 37 of them. Most of them teach in the public schools of New York City and elsewhere, and by and large they are of exceptionally high caliber. Of course, we pay good salaries, up to twenty-five dollars for a Sunday morning, but I think that even those teachers who were initially attracted by the money have stayed because they like it. We give our teachers a great deal of freedom; in fact, I tell them if they teach only what's in the syllabus they aren't much good to the school. And if you look at our syllabi—of which, incidentally, we've sold over a thousand copies to other schools—you'll see that they change from year to year, because we constantly experiment, incorporating ideas of rabbis, teachers, parents."

I asked Kurzband about the formal training of the teachers in Judaism. "Over half of our teachers," he said, "have earned a Teacher's Certificate at the Hebrew Union School of Education" (issued by the New York Federation of Reform Synagogues). To receive a certificate, a student must take courses of six credits each in Jewish history, principles and practices of Reform Judaism, Bible, and Hebrew, eight credits in pedagogy, and four elective credits.

On a subsequent visit I asked Kurzband whether he thought a course of six credits in Jewish history was enough to qualify a man to teach the subject, especially in the higher grades. "Our teachers," he answered, "do *not* stop with these courses. They read on their own and they take follow-up courses. In addition, we have workshops for them."

"But," I persisted, "my red sheet says that over half of your teaching staff holds teaching certificates, which means that almost half don't even have that minimum. Now, in view of all the freedom you give them, how can you be sure they don't slip into error in instruction?"

"We do have a problem here," Kurzband

*Unless otherwise stated, all figures relate to the year 1956.

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said, "but our solution is to take good teachers who understand children and possess the necessary pedagogic skills and techniques and encourage them to learn the subject, rather than take scholars who cannot get through to the children."

Later I learned that this was the usual practice in Sunday schools—indeed, the concentration on teaching skills, with the relegation of content to a secondary place, is the hallmark of American pedagogy below the university level—and that the White Plains school was exceptional in having so many teachers possessed of these minimum requirements. Most Sunday school instruction is apparently in the hands of public school teachers with little formal Jewish training.

WE ARRIVED at the Center shortly before nine o'clock. Like the handsome houses roundabout, it too was set on a spacious lawn, and from the front I saw one of those rectangular two-story structures of red brick and glass that clearly signal a modern school. At one end it was attached to a taller, cylindrical building, still scaffolded and under construction, bulging out into the lawn. This was the new temple building, another sign of the congregation's rapid growth. The lawn in front of the temple was littered with heaps of sand, wheelbarrows, rolls of wire, tar drums, and stacks of girders. (Since my visit the building has been completed.)

At the driveway we were waved in by a local policeman specially assigned to direct the traffic converging on the Center, we passed a sign announcing "Services in Gymnasium Building," and came to a large, bleak-looking parking lot in the rear. There we were directed into a space by an unshaven gentleman dressed in the comfortably wrinkled clothes of a country squire. "You see that man?" Kurzband whispered to me. "He's one of the biggest surgeons in New York. Once a month he helps direct the traffic; says he gets a big kick out of it." Around the lot I saw other men vigorously directing incoming cars.

We crossed the parking lot and entered the Center through double glass doors. Inside, everything looked new, very clean, and tastefully simple. First, behind large windows, there was a good-sized lobby with unadorned walls painted in a light pastel shade, the floor was covered with linoleum inlay, and the ceiling was finished in soundproof white tile. On the left, again behind plate glass, a row of administrative offices filled with banks of filing cabinets was visible, and on the right extended one of the school wings. There were some chairs and a sofa in the lobby, all modern and comfortable, and a table which exhibited, under glass, photostats of letters written by Jews during the American revolution. Set into one wall was a tiny Judaica shop with an enormous display window; it offered religious articles, books, and various Jewish knickknacks. Records made by the Center's Cantor Smolover (under the name R. Oliver) were prominently displayed. Here and there I also saw posters announcing a lecture by Dr. Abraham Franzblau before a PTA meeting.

The last set of offices were those of the school, where Kurzband now took me. For the next quarter of an hour he was a very busy man indeed, holding hasty last-minute conferences with his teachers. When the bell rang for the second time and all the teachers departed to their classes, Kurzband introduced me to the members of the office staff, quickly showed me around the building, and then led me in to see the two rabbis of the Center, Drs. Schwartz and Stein. (Rabbi Stein is now in a Port Washington pulpit.) The rabbis, like almost everyone else I was to meet at the Center, started the conversation by telling me what a wonderful job Kurzband had done and how much they thought of him and of his teachers. I raised the question of the school's religious orientation, and Dr. Schwartz, the senior rabbi, said, "We have a policy on that," and went to another office and brought back a small, seven-page pamphlet printed on glossy paper. It listed the aims of the school as follows: to help the child (1) develop a religious approach to life; (2) become acquainted with the Jewish heritage; (3) associate with fellow Jews in religious, social, and educational activities; (4) derive continuing enrichment from Jewish education.

The other question I raised concerned the teaching of Hebrew. Kurzband had told me that only 15 per cent of the pupils were learning Hebrew and I asked the rabbis what was being done to prepare the rest of the children to participate in the Center's religious services, which are conducted to a considerable extent in Hebrew. "We have

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an assembly period every Sunday," Rabbi Schwartz answered, "and the children learn the chants and responses there." As I was leaving the office one of the secretaries brought me a huge stack of printed material, including syllabi, class schedules, brief biographies of the faculty members, reports, memos, extracts of parents' reactions to report cards, teachers' evaluations of all kinds of projects, minutes and agenda of the school committee, etc., etc.—all mimeographed on gaily colored paper.

I SPENT the rest of the morning wandering around the school on my own. Noticing that Hebrew was taught in the classrooms situated in the old part of the building—then in the process of being remodeled (the remodeling has since been completed)—I opened the door to one of them and instantly felt as if I had stepped into one of the dingy classrooms where I myself had taught Hebrew more than ten years ago in the basements of Orthodox *shuls* in Washington Heights and Brooklyn. The narrow room was lit by two naked bulbs, the walls were dirty and discolored, the desks scarred and worn with age. The method of instruction, too, was reminiscent of the *cheder*. But the teacher seemed highly competent. I could not tell how effective such small doses of Hebrew instruction would be over a number of years, though in the "Annual Report on the Religious School for 1955-56" I read that "steps have been taken to improve the quality of preparation in Hebrew for Bar Mitzvah candidates . . . Private tutoring has been found advisable for a number of the boys."

I left the class just as the bell rang at 11:45 for the change of sessions. During the next fifteen minutes nearly a thousand children moved in and out of the glass doors of the lobby, the girls in giggling groups of threes and fours, the boys talking volubly. They were a healthy, bright-looking lot, carefree and notably uninhibited.

But the activity in the lobby seemed restrained compared with the goings-on in the parking lot. It had not occurred to me before that not for nothing had a traffic squad been stationed at the Center—every one of the school's 1,300 children had to be transported there and back by car. Though more than a hundred cars were already wedged into the parking lot, the traffic squad of surgeons, lawyers, manufacturers, and advertising men had kept several lanes clear, and as each mother came driving in, following the snappy directions of the traffic squad, she would quickly pull up in front of the glass doors, unload one set of children (her own and her neighbors') who were to attend the late morning session, pick up a group from the early morning session, and ride off again. The whole transaction took less than a minute.

For the remainder of the day, I looked in on a few more classes, and on subsequent visits I toured other grades, so that in the end I managed to cover the school with some thoroughness.

But before I report on what I saw in the classrooms I'd like to describe an interview I had with a parent who is one of the Center's less active members, a lady whom I contacted through a mutual friend and who had agreed to talk to me on condition that I did not reveal her identity. Let me call her Mrs. Schumann. Mrs. Schumann is an attractive, intelligent, and highly articulate woman in her early forties. Her husband is a successful lawyer. Her older daughter was confirmed at the White Plains Jewish Community Center several years ago and is now attending an out-of-town college, her younger daughter is still going to public school and to the JCC Sunday school. I met the lady in the New York office of a large philanthropic Jewish organization to which she gives generously of her time and money.

I had been intrigued by Mrs. Schumann's stipulating that I should not reveal her name, and my first question to her was, "What don't you like about the school?" It turned out that Mrs. Schumann's complaint concerned the size of the school. "Thirteen hundred children in the school, two hundred in next year's graduating class!" she exclaimed. "How can the rabbis possibly know each child? And I feel strongly the rabbis ought to know each child intimately in order to be able to help them now and later in life." She added, "I often wonder why our congregation has grown so large. New congregations are being founded in Westchester all the time, and still we keep getting bigger." I suggested that newcomers might prefer joining a wealthy, well-established congregation to building a new one. "Do you really think so?" Mrs. Schumann asked with

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a smile; "you know most of our really wealthy German Jewish families have moved away. Still, I have heard of parents of teen-age girls who join so that their daughters can go to the Center's junior dances."

I asked Mrs. Schumann what influence the Sunday school had had on her children and on the religious atmosphere at home. She answered, "The children don't discuss these matters with us. My smaller daughter fusses a good deal during the year, claiming she is bored with the repetition of holiday celebrations, but at the beginning of each new year, when I give her the choice of returning to school or staying away, she trots off like a lamb, and I am sure it does her a world of good. And my older girl took a Bible with her when she went off to college, something that would never have occurred to me. At home we have given up Christmas and the Christmas tree and celebrate Chanukah instead, and we make a seder at Passover, too."

THE curriculum of the first three grades, ages six through eight, was concentrated on the Jewish festivals and stories from the Bible, which were to be related, it was stressed again and again in the syllabus, to the children's own experience. I did not see much of the first grade, which meets only on Saturday, and when I visited the second grade, the boys and girls were sitting quietly around several round low tables, telling each other about their spring vacations. I had better luck with the two third-grade classes. Their rooms were located on the first floor of the new school building. The corridor was high, spotlessly clean, painted in bright pastel colors, and equipped with fluorescent lighting. On one wall there was a bulletin board covered with Jewish newspapers from all countries and in all languages. Several doors along the hall were left open, and I could hear snatches of song and recitation from the various rooms. The third grade, though, was very quiet when I entered. The first thing I noticed was that everything in the room—desk, chairs, and so on—was scaled down to the size of the children, and later I observed that the size of the equipment even varied from grade to grade.

At the moment a history lesson was in progress. The teacher was sitting in the back of the classroom while up front a pretty, dark-haired, sixteen-year-old girl was reading aloud the story of Saul and David. (She was one of the school's assistant teachers Kurzband had told me about, a recent graduate who was being paid a nominal sum for her services.) I let myself down on one of the low chairs and looked around. The classroom, like most others in the school, was large and bright. One side wall was practically all window, the front wall was covered by a new blackboard, and the other two walls were decorated with art work done by the children. I recognized embattled Jericho, a great many shofars, pictures of Joshua and the patriarchs, all executed in bold lines and bright colors.

When the young girl had finished reading, the teacher, Miss Ring, played the alphabet game with the children. She would call out a letter and the children had to give the names of as many Biblical figures as they could remember. They seemed to enjoy the game hugely. At one point, when the class got stuck on the letter "N," Miss Ring held up several large paper cut-outs, obviously their own work. One was of the ark and the other showed a white dove in flight against the background of a violently colored rainbow. Immediately there was a flurry of hands and a wave of irrepressible whispers, "Noah! Noah!"

The other third-grade class I visited was deep in its "activity period" when I arrived, and the teacher, Mrs. Liss (who is a graduate of the Minneapolis Hebrew Teachers' College) showed me her group's accomplishments with considerable pride. The tables in the room were cluttered with clay and paints and there was a good deal of noise and the usual organized confusion typical of activity time under the progressive dispensation. The children chatted freely among themselves while they worked, and somebody was always coming up to Mrs. Liss or the two assistant teachers for help.

Then she showed me one of the class projects, a nomadic village in clay and paints. There were primitive houses with outside stairs, a profusion of patriarchs in flowing robes, brown nomadic cattle, walls, palm trees, and plenty of sand. From the walls of the classroom still more patriarchs looked down at me, not to mention several representations of Pharaoh's daughter in the nursery of baby Moses. Leaning against one

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wall I saw an outsize cardboard scroll with the word *megillah* in Hebrew letters on it. I must say I was highly impressed with what was being accomplished in the third grade, in the first three grades, in fact. It seemed so much more than I could ever have hoped to accomplish when I was a Hebrew teacher, teaching in the strict, parsimonious, old-fashioned way of the Orthodox Talmud Torah.

IN THE fourth to the sixth grades, ages nine to eleven, the emphasis largely shifts from the past to the present. Grades four and five still touch lightly on history, through stories of Jewish heroes from the prophet Elijah to Chaim Weizmann, but much more time is devoted to the Jewish community in America and to the congregation of White Plains in particular. The sixth grade is almost entirely given over to the Jewish community in America. Syllabus units include the story of Jewish immigration to America ("All Americans are immigrants") and the struggle for "human rights" in early America ("The ideas of the UN declaration of human rights [are] in agreement with the ideas of Judaism") and a Hall of Fame of American Jews.

I briefly looked in on the fourth grade which was boning up on their final examination, then hurried on to the fifth, to meet the teacher, young Mr. Chalat, who Dr. Kurzband, with obvious pride, had told me was the first Center graduate to return as a full-fledged teacher. Chalat was just then reviewing the year's work with his class. The main impression I had from this review was that the customs and ceremonies described in the school still remained quite remote from the children. Several children could not remember what a seder was. "Don't you recall the seder we had here in school?" Chalat asked one child. "Don't you remember we had one in every class, with one of the fathers presiding?" "Oh, yes," the child answered, "now I know. A seder is a sort of dinner people have on Passover." "Right," said Chalat, and he went on to explain why Jews have a seder and how they conduct it. When the class came to discuss what the syllabus calls "the traditional beliefs regarding ceremonials," Chalat asked, "What is the first thing you notice when you enter an Orthodox synagogue?" A ten-year-old raised his hand and said gravely, "The men all wear beanies." "Yes," Chalat responded, "and what are those beanies called?" When he had elicited the right answer, he passed on to the respective positions of women in Orthodox and Reform Judaism. He had a difficult time at first because the children, unexpectedly, expressed themselves in favor of separating men and women in the synagogue—they thought the women talked too much and had best be segregated—but finally they were persuaded to accept the Reform view.

The next class I visited was taught by Mr. Finkelstein, one of the school's veteran teachers. The children had pushed their desks together and were working in committees of four. Each group was filling out a large worksheet, answering a series of questions about ghetto life. Since the class was "cooperating" there was a good deal of noise, in the midst of which the assistant teachers went around correcting papers.

When Finkelstein started the discussion period, the class speedily quieted. In the discussion, the teacher was true to the school's pedagogic principles: to make the ghetto intelligible to his pupils, he invariably posed his questions in a way that would involve the children personally. The typical form was, "Suppose you lived in a ghetto, how would you spend your day?" One little boy answered, "Well, I'd get up in the morning, have my oatmeal, then go out and sell old clothes." "Would your life be any different from what it is now?" Finkelstein asked. "No," the boy said. Finkelstein then repeated his question to another boy, who said, "My life would have been very different. The ghetto was dirty and overcrowded, there was a curfew at night, and the Jews had to wear special clothes. I am glad I live in this country."

At the end of the period Finkelstein announced that he would like to hear what the children considered the most important lesson they had learned from their worksheet. There were some answers of the kind which children learn to use to please their teachers: "It taught us to work together with other people." One boy said, "I think that since the Jews were freed from the ghetto through the efforts of others, they now ought to help those who need it to become free"—which struck me as exactly the kind of intelligent,

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civic-minded, liberal American response the school was seeking to elicit.

THE three highest grades, which prepare children for confirmation, are in a sense the most important, representing as they do the school's last chance to instill its convictions about Jewish history and religion. They are also apt to be the most trying, because they reveal with great clarity the difficulties inherent in the school's attempt to fit traditional Jewish teachings into the framework of a modern liberal American way of life.

The lessons taught in the seventh grade feature, according to the syllabus, "Bible selections, supplemented by modern archaeological and historical research." Here is an example—taken from the review-sheet of the seventh grade—of how the intention is realized in practice: "Moses led the Israelites eastward toward the Red Sea to a spot where it was fordable and brought them safely across. . . . Pharaoh appeared at the ford with his army and chariots and ordered them to go on after the Israelites. The wheels of the heavy chariots became stuck in the mud and Pharaoh was obliged to give up the pursuit. Moses sang the SONG OF PRAISE TO GOD. To prepare the Israelites to become a democratic nation, Moses at Mount Sinai taught them a new idea of God." (Note the graphic detail of the wheels stuck in the mud and the rather breathtaking association of the Revelation on Sinai with modern democracy.)

The school's difficulty lies, of course, in its modern approach to the Bible as historical source material: it does accept the "facts" as history, but rejects the supernatural interpretation, and the ensuing rewriting of the Biblical narrative results in such passages of bowdlerized Bible and dubious science.

Jewish history is carried up to the present in the eighth and ninth grades, more or less along the conventional Reform lines which stress the liberalization of Judaism in the 19th and 20th centuries. The religious curriculum, however, contains not only units on Judaism, under such headings as "God, Man and Nature," "Man and Society," "God and Israel," but also requires lessons on Christianity and the religions of the East. On the occasion of my visit the topic happened to be Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism.

Midway through the hour the class filed out to see some slides, and as I followed them my eye was caught by an issue of *Life* dealing with Buddhism on the teacher's desk. Many passages had been heavily underlined in pencil. I also noted that one of the textbooks used by the class was a compilation of articles on the various religions which had originally appeared in *Look*.

In the next room a small projector had been set up and slides, also from the *Life* series, were shown to the two eighth-grade sections. The thirteen-year-old who had been assigned to read aloud the captions beneath the slides, dealing with the secret way of Tao, kept stumbling over words like "curator," "archive," and "benign." The class paid little attention.

In the ninth grade, I witnessed a class in ethics dealing with problems arising at home and in school, i.e., a course that more conservatively Jewish parents do not consider "really Jewish." The interest of the students in the discussion was keen. Going through the final examinations for this class I found the following questions: "What should be your attitude if: (a) you are at a party and are talking to a boy (or girl) who does not know you are Jewish. He (she) makes a nasty remarks about all the Jews moving from New York to Westchester. And (b) your parents forbid you to go on a date with a non-Jewish friend." Just when the discussion grew animated the time (forty-five minutes) ran out, and the pupils trooped to their history class. I was sorry to see them go because I had hoped to pick up some clues about how the older children look on themselves as Jews; but later, when I tried to discuss this matter with some of the older boys and girls, I found them uncommunicative. Apparently parents and teachers have much the same experience. One mother spoke to me of the Chinese wall between herself and her daughter in the matter of religion, and a father confessed, "I have no idea what my son thinks, only time will tell what kind of a Jew he'll turn out to be."

The ninth-grade session devoted to history was in charge of a teacher who had told me it was a difficult group, that there had been a considerable turnover in teachers, and that he had only come in at midterm. He himself seemed ill at ease in front of the upper-class children in their expensive clothes, lounging negligently in their chairs and speaking up in the clear, modulated, incisive

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accents of Westchester. From his own aggressively slurred pronunciation it was evident how conscious he was of his poorer background. Also, his knowledge of the subject he taught was fragmentary and he grew tense whenever questions arose, as they frequently did, that took him out of his depth. When I entered the room he was delivering a lecture on Jewish mysticism, and I caught the following remarks concerning Sabbatai, or Shabtai, Zvi. "Shabtai Zvi came to a synagogue in Salonica and said he was the Messiah. They told him he was a phony and kicked him out." One boy asked, àpropos Shabtai's conversion to Mohammedanism, whether some of his followers had not considered this another of the temptations in the way of the Messiah and continued to believe in him. This was, of course, what actually did happen in many cases, and I thought it brilliant of a fourteen-year-old to have seen it. But the teacher did not appreciate the question and cut the boy off.

The only phase of the ninth-grade course that I failed to see was the special confirmation class taught by both rabbis and the cantor to the assembled group of 120 ninth-graders. However, I did see Rabbi Stein's mimeographed outline of his ten lectures on the Jewish concept of God. I asked Rabbi Stein about a passage in his outline where he speaks of science holding blindly to the unproven belief in an ordered universe. "Do you really think," I asked, "that the scientists are blind as to the nature of their hypotheses?" "Well," the rabbi answered, "understand that the children come to us with their heads full of rationalistic ideas about science contradicting religion. I want to show them that science, too, takes certain things on faith. Of course, I realize that these are not easy matters for fourteen-year-olds to understand, but they are vitally important questions which every Jew ought to face sometime in his life, and if we don't discuss them with the boys and girls in school, who will?"

A similar position was taken by Kurzband when one of the members of the Religious School Board criticized the curriculum taught in the upper grades for being too advanced for the children. "You need a certain maturity to grasp the Jewish concept of God," this man said; "ideally, Jewish education ought to extend through life." "You're right," Kurzband replied. "But I am faced with a very practical problem. Every week end 1,300 children are deposited on my doorstep by parents who expect me to make Jews out of their children. And I know that what these children learn and experience in my school will be, in all likelihood, all the Jewish knowledge they will ever absorb in a systematic fashion. Therefore we can't wait for them to mature, we have to teach them the things which in former times they would have picked up at home and in their community when they were ready for them. If our children are not mature enough to grasp fully the concept of God or Jewish messianic thought, we must nonetheless try to give them an inkling of these matters. All this is fairly new in Jewish education and we are bound to make mistakes. We'll experiment, we'll rewrite our syllabi, we'll change the shape of our courses and see how others do it; but one thing we won't do, we won't give up teaching our children those ideas which are the heart of Judaism."

WHILE for most Jewish children religious education comes to an end with Bar Mitzvah or confirmation, a certain number of Center graduates return to work as assistant teachers, doing a variety of chores such as calling the roll, keeping attendance records, collecting charity money, etc., etc. They are required to prepare themselves for this position by enrolling in special classes for one year. Once qualified, they receive a salary of $20 for a total of 32 Sunday mornings and $25 for the second year. Of the 1956 crop of 120 graduates, 50 volunteered to return, much to the school's gratification. One of the assistant teachers told me that he liked the job because now he really understood the eighth-grade lectures. Other explanations of why the young people return as assistant teachers included prestige, social pressure, the need to list extracurricular activities on college applications. And, of course, they do derive the advantages that come with responsibility and leadership.

But whatever the motivation and whatever the usefulness of the program to the school or to the assistant teachers, there is no doubt that to have induced so many members of the new generation—who, of course, will soon form the nucleus of the congregation—to come to the Center regularly and of their own volition, is a major achievement.

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For perhaps the most significant point to be made about the Center, viewed as an element of Jewish community life in Westchester, is the apathy against which it must contend. To see the matter in its true perspective, we need only keep in mind one very simple set of figures: 1955 Yom Kippur attendance (in a specially hired hall)—3,336; 1955 average Friday night attendance—100.

The mediating term between these two extremes lies in the 1,300 children who attend the school and the 1,300 families who belong to the Center. The coincidence of these last two figures is not entirely accidental: families are required to join if they want to send their children to the school.

Now, while the authorities can do little missionary work among the crowds who show up for the High Holidays—"Where do they come from?" Rabbi Stein once asked jokingly—they can and do work on the parents of their 1,300 pupils, though the only physical contact most of the congregants have with the Center is that brief moment on Sunday morning when they unload their children on the steps of the school.

The first time I met Dr. Kurzband he had told me, "In the Reform field the school is the core—parents join when the kids come in," and later I saw just how central the school's position in the Center was. For example, in the Center's 1955-56 budget of $175,000—collected by assessing each family $175 (those who cannot afford the fee pay less)—the largest slice, $49,000, went to the school, and another $4,500 to youth activities. Of the money allotted to the school, the teaching and administrative staff received $33,100 in salaries plus $1,500 for transportation and expenses. Supplies and printing came to $1,200, and postage alone amounted to $700. (At three cents a letter one could send 23,100 letters for this sum; at two cents, 35,000 letters.) I might add that the Center has its own postage bill of $1,500 and a printing and stationery bill of $6,000.

Actually, the share going to the school is understated in the budget, since it does not take into account items like the services of two rabbis and the cantor, and if one were to prorate such expenses as building maintenance, telephone bills, insurance, repairs, etc., etc., the school's appropriation would undoubtedly add up to more than half the budget.

The efforts to bring the parents into the school's activities and, by extension, into the life of the Center are unremitting, and probably account for the lion's share of the postage bills. Appeals to sit on PTA boards and requests that parents read Bible stories to the younger children and cooperate on projects like the sixth-grade family tree, go out regularly. In addition to these time-worn devices, the administration has pioneered some new ones, as, for example, booklets written especially for parents describing the work done in the various grades, proposed experimental classes involving close and continuous cooperation between school and home, and a service conducted in the home for individual confirmants. This last was still in the planning stage when I visited the Center, but it, or something like it, will almost certainly be inaugurated, because everyone feels that the present mass confirmation services have become too impersonal.

In its attempt to reach the parents the school had refined even such a traditional tool as the report card, providing it with space for the student's self-evaluation, the teacher's reflections, and parental remarks. Kurzband showed me a batch of these cards and I jotted down several comments made by parents:

"As much as I hate to admit it the Sunday School is the only religious training our children will receive."

"We are people first and Jews second. In our home it's what a person is, not how often he attends temple."

"As to our religious observance, we are each on his own in this matter and would consider it a breach of privacy to be criticized. We don't feel the school has the responsibility to enrich the 'Jewish living' of our family."

"I want you to know how much she enjoys her classes and what this has done for us at home. We have 'round table' discussions before holidays and we are delighted with her explanations. . . ."

Yet only 12 per cent of the parents in the school bothered to comment at all on the report cards, which, as one of the teachers complained to me, had taken so much of the staff's time to prepare. Other attempts to draw the parents in did not seem to fare any better. Time and again the Center's bulletin

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carries comments like these, "Are parents just not interested? As many as sixty mothers see to it that their children attend a pre-school party—as few as six remain for a workshop session held at the same time. Why?"

Of this minority perhaps the most active are the members of the Religious School Committee, who meet once a month to set policy for classroom instruction and to wrestle with the spiritual implications of their recommendations. From time to time, members of the committee address memoranda and open letters to one another which are mimeographed and distributed. The most interesting of these publications is a document entitled "Perplexities of Suburban Jewish Education," which runs to 24 mimeographed pages, complete with footnotes, cross references, and learned digressions. Its author, Dr. L. H. Grunebaum, was for years chairman of the committee, and he is still an active member, deeply respected in the congregation, if not always agreed with.

Dr. Grunebaum is pessimistic in his evaluation of the school, more pessimistic, I think, than he was in September 1947 when he wrote in COMMENTARY ("A Parent Looks at Jewish Education"): "Our local religious school is professionally considered as good as effort can organize and money can buy." Yet, "the fact is that the youngsters are indifferent—and the parents dissatisfied."

In the "Perplexities," which appeared in 1954 and was intended only for private consumption within the community, Grunebaum spoke out even more strongly. He vehemently protested against "the unsuitable intellectual content of our curriculum," "material that is above the understanding and interest sphere of our students," and referred to "the incessant complaints that religious school is boring" (particularly in the higher grades). He records that "the amount of learning . . . is . . . minimal for the average student." And that "a decrease in lesson time . . . some years ago . . . was greeted with such a relief by our students and parents that the attitude to school definitely improved." His proposal now, as in 1947, was to attempt to adapt the religious school to the spirit of the modern world: "The needs that today's children actually feel or can be made to feel *alone* [my italics] determine what part of yesterday's heritage should be taught in our religious school."

ACCORDING to Grunebaum, it is the lack of religious feeling in the adult community which is responsible for the school situation. He finds that at least 80 per cent of the adult membership "does little more than send its children to school." "Why," he asks, "do these parents who themselves never come near the temple nevertheless send their children to Religious School—often not merely for a year or two but anywhere from five to nine years?" The answer can be found, he says, partly in such things as family traditions, nostalgia, indecision on the matter of religion. "Yet, surely one of the most decisive factors is the social life of suburban parents and children. People [in Scarsdale and White Plains] belong to the middle and upper classes. . . . Nearly everyone has some religious affiliation . . . most children go to some Sunday school." And Jewish "children will find that many of their Gentile friendships gradually become more and more attenuated; that the house parties are . . . predominantly conducted with a peculiar *numerus clausus* on both sides; . . . gradually the unaffiliated parent sees that . . . if he wants his child to become a soundly and smoothly integrated participant in suburban life, he had better join a congregation and send his [child] to Sunday school."

"Perplexities" also contains some very frank words about the religious atmosphere in the majority of homes from which the school's student body is drawn. "Interest in the Jewish tradition has withered, ceremonials are not adhered to; the basic skills of prayer have been lost; their relationship to God bothers few people. . . . Hebrew is unknown. . . . We may regard the Christmas tree found in many Jewish homes [in Westchester] as a perfect symbol of the well-nigh complete acculturation to suburban 'normality.'"

No wonder "the children . . . suffer from a kind of mild schizophrenia. *Here* are the rabbi, director, cantor and teachers; *there* are the parents. . . . *Here* is supernaturalism, prayer, the Ten Commandments, Jewish customs and ceremonies. *There* is science, atomic facts, sex and Mickey Spillane, American ways and values. . . . So it comes about that the attempt to make children more secure as members of the Jewish community has in many cases the opposite result. Uncertainty and insecurity are increased and

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the children's suspicion of adult hypocrisy is strengthened because the traditions, customs and beliefs of the religious school are at complete variance with home life." For Dr. Grunebaum, the only bright spot in this dismal picture is the return of some children as assistant teachers.

THE last time I saw the school was at confirmation services late in May. Since the new Center building had not yet been completed, services were held this one time out of doors. An enormous green and white striped tent accommodating more than 1,200 people had been pitched in the middle of the parking lot. The weather was warm and balmy, and festively dressed men, women, and children by the hundreds were milling around in the lot, while the 120 confirmants were assembling in the Center lobby, the girls bedecked in white robes and the boys in blue. There was an air of excitement in the assembly, and I could see the managers —the rabbis, the cantor, Dr. Kurzband, and the members of the Divine Service Committee (distinguished by their red boutonnieres) —bustling about. I strolled into the tent and observed the banked masses of flowers, the extensive decorations, and the public address system with its forest of microphones, its eight loudspeakers, and the special telephone circuit connecting the sound technician up front with one of the committee members sitting at the entrance. Making my way past the ranks of wooden folding chairs, I went up to the raised platform under the tent where four armchairs flanked the Holy Ark. The Ark itself was imposing, with large doors and the Eternal Light shining against the background of a small velvet cloth on which the Ten Commandments were embroidered. (On closer inspection it turned out the Ark was only a façade: there was nothing behind its doors but a little platform filled with sound equipment.)

By now the crowd was rapidly streaming into the tent, so I returned and found myself a seat. All about me there rose an animated murmur and the air under the high tent roof smelled of spring and the subtle perfumes of well-groomed women. Then the rabbis, the cantor, and the president of the congregation took their seats near the Ark, the organ began to play, and the confirmants marched in. Immediately, flashbulbs started to pop and movie cameras hummed as amateur photographers jumped out of every row imploring the confirmants to look their way. The processional over, the services began in earnest. Rabbi Stein pronounced the opening prayer, cantor and choir chanted, and two tall boys stammered their way through two short Hebrew prayers. Then the confirmation class, assisted by the Chorale Group and Temple Choir, presented what the printed program called "Elijah, A Sermon in Song. Music by Felix Mendelssohn. Narrated by Morton Wishengrad." A religious playlet, it went on and on in rather lofty accents; the archaic language, with a vaguely Biblical sound, was alternately declaimed and chanted by narrator, chorus, and solo voices, and the words came metallically through the somnolent air over the eight loudspeakers. The audience, on its folding chairs, seemed uncomfortable, respectful, and impressed.

When the play was ended, the president made a short speech which was followed by the Adoration and the Benediction. Then Dr. Kurzband and three other dignitaries presented Bibles and diplomas to the 120 confirmants who filed past and out in a smoothly flowing line, with the organ playing *Eliyahu Ha-navi,* the movie cameras grinding, and still cameras clicking.

All at once everybody seemed to be out in the parking lot, a big happy crowd walking about in the warm sunshine, kissing and congratulating each other and snapping pictures assiduously. Kurzband came up to me, smiling broadly. "Wonderful day," he said; "what luck we had with the weather." A lady nearby exchanged congratulations with Kurzband and then went on to say, "I am a little disappointed, though. When I was confirmed we went up to be individually blessed by the rabbi and there was that one moment of being up there alone, that instant of communion that *made* the occasion." "These children had it too," Kurzband replied, "at the consecration rites in the Temple earlier this week. Remember what you saw just now were really the graduation exercises."

The crowd stayed for about fifteen minutes and then, quite suddenly, melted away. Twenty minutes later, when Kurzband and I drove off, nobody was left but the janitor and his helpers who were folding up the chairs and preparing for the men who were to come and take the tent away.

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THE POLITICS OF RECESSION

Liberals vs. Conservatives

ROBERT LEKACHMAN

BEFORE the current recession began many economists were agreed that, although the science of economic forecasting was closer to meteorology than astronomy in precision, we knew in a rough way what to do to reverse the course of economic contraction once the contraction was identified. The middle-of-the-road economists probably concurred in the sequence of steps for dealing with a recession which Professor Arthur F. Burns, former chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, outlined in a series of lectures delivered in the autumn of last year.* Appropriate policy should begin with an easing of credit. Here the central agency is the Federal Reserve Board. Most literate Americans can recite the litany of that agency's powers to curtail reserve requirements, lower the interest rates the Federal Reserve banks charge for advances to commercial banks, and increase the supply of cash by judicious purchases of government securities from banks, life insurance companies, corporations, and pension and mutual funds. So much in the way of public education the recession must be credited with. One important uncertainty of monetary policy, however, is perhaps less widely appreciated. Because the Federal Reserve Board is an autonomous agency, the President has no direct, legal control over credit policy. In this recession, the President's economic advisers have differed almost openly with the Federal Reserve Board about the timing and extent of monetary intervention. But legally, the inevitable last word in such disputes remains with the Federal Reserve Board.

In Dr. Burns's anti-recession policy, tax reduction follows monetary easing. No doubt, part of the art of economic management here as elsewhere lies in waiting long enough for the economy to respond to the monetary policy. But when this response is inadequate or sluggish, tax reduction is appropriate. If the aim is to end the recession rather than to improve social conditions as liberals might wish, or reduce the degree of progression in the personal income tax, the heart's desire of many conservatives, then policy-makers will endeavor to leave unchanged the existing income distribution. Much depends on prompt, firm action, because a tax cut granted late in a recession, when apprehension and uncertainty have produced caution, might increase saving more than it increased spending. Early in a recession, when few are out of work and profits in most lines are still high, tax reduction can probably increase spending sharply. Something, of course, depends upon how the reduction is granted. If spread over twelve months, the income gain for most taxpayers is trifling. If concentrated in one month, it would put sizable sums into many hands. Although the total change in spending might be the same, in the first instance items whose price tags are small—food, some articles of clothing, recreation—might enjoy the bulk of initial benefit, and in the second appliances and cars might find more customers with down-payments in hand.

But tax cuts may not do the job. The characteristic they share with easier credit policy is permissiveness. Both create the conditions out of which increased spending may flow, but neither guarantees the result. A

ROBERT LEKACHMAN's "How We Beat the Machine" appeared in our April number. An associate professor of economics at Barnard, Mr. Lekachman is preparing a history of economic thought.

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third step does insure larger expenditure. The President can accelerate placement of government contracts, advance existing public construction schedules, and, where possible, shift outlays destined for the distant future to the near future and those designed for the near future to the present. The President possesses considerable power to juggle existing appropriations for purposes which have already won Congressional approval. When the President takes such action, he increases the flow of government expenditure without withdrawing additional funds from the economy, except in the happy event that recovery swells the incomes out of which tax receipts come. Such a policy neither expands the sphere of government activity nor incurs charges of waste. But there are limits to its effectiveness, partly because of the size of appropriations available for rescheduling, and partly because of the need for efficient, orderly progress on projects already begun. When these limits have been reached, Dr. Burns contemplates as a final step the initiation of new public works, financed out of budget deficits. If prudent forethought has accumulated plans for desirable improvements, the time which must elapse between a project's contemplation and execution can be shortened, and the possibility that it will be a valuable addition to the community's social assets can be increased.

Not all economists are agreed in considering this program the best possible sequence of policies. Credit policy need not cease when tax reductions begin. Necessarily, policies will overlap. In the well-publicized disagreement between the Senate's Paul Douglas and Harvard's J. K. Galbraith, the former advocated tax cuts first and the latter public works first. Yet, despite preferences of this kind, economists agree widely that these four kinds of action, in some combination, would produce recovery in an economy already sheltered, to some degree at least, by unemployment compensation, aid to farmers, and supplementary unemployment compensation arrangements. This convergence of opinion does not ignore the possibility that unwise anti-recession action today might store up inflationary troubles for tomorrow. Confidence in vigorous action stems from the belief that troubles are best handled singly. The inflationary repercussions of anti-recession policy, so much in the minds of the President and some of his advisers, can be dealt with as they appear.

HAVE the events of the last six or eight months—steadily deepening recession, low demand for steel and autos, rising unemployment, and the threat that the recession will prove cumulative rather than self-limiting—shattered the profession's faith in the efficacy of its remedies? There is no real reason to suppose so, for only the most timid use of the remedies has been made. Credit relaxation has been almost the sum of the Eisenhower administration's anti-recession policy. Many of the programs labeled anti-recession prove on examination rather routine measures, likely to increase public spending only in the relatively distant future. True, a very moderate amount of expenditure rescheduling has been undertaken. But the most powerful permissive weapon—tax cuts—and the most effective expenditure technique—new public works—have not been tried. Although history cannot be re-run to verify alternative hypotheses, the balance of probability supports the conclusion that large tax cuts early applied could by now at least have limited further contraction and conceivably promoted renewed expansion.

However, the fact that the administration has equivocated (as of the end of April) on these measures does point to a problem whose urgency many members of the economic profession seem optimistically to have underestimated. This problem concerns the extent to which there is general agreement on the nature of anti-recession policy. Economists have been very sanguine about the substantial consensus that is supposed to exist among politicians, economists, and even most businessmen on the propriety of using the weapons of budget deficit to combat recession. The reasonable economic statements of the Committee on Economic Development, a business group which has consistently kept

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abreast of economic opinion, seem to support this hopeful view, and a variety of arguments have been used to demonstrate the inevitability of vigorous government action in the political interests of the party in power. Although most economists might have identified a liberal preference for monetary measures, they did not doubt the willingness of conservatives to use both.

If recent events demonstrate anything, it is the inaccuracy of this opinion. Economists have not carried along with them all of the most alert members of the business community, let alone a majority of businessmen. Neither have they persuaded politicians in the bulk that fighting the recession is a matter of technique rather than of value judgment. It is this last point which I wish to examine in the remainder of this article, for I am persuaded that the hesitancies and inadequacies of recent policy are the direct result of conflicting political and social attitudes rather than of inferior techniques and insufficient knowledge.

WHAT is the conservative attitude, twenty-two years after Keynes? Month after month the First National City Bank *Monthly Letter* presents intelligently, temperately, and ingeniously a highly suspicious view of government activity, of the propriety of deficits, and of the merits of Keynesian economics. Although there is obvious danger in taking one periodical to represent an entire wing of opinion, no injustice is done when that periodical is the best of its kind.

How does the conservative regard recession and its control? First of all, recession is unavoidable. "Given the necessity of adjustment, the fact that the curtailment has proceeded rapidly may be favorable. At least some of the things that had to be done have been accomplished"—so it is stated in the April issue of the *Monthly Letter*. Few economists would disagree with the implication that the business cycle is a feature of industrial societies, but many would question the additional implication that its path and behavior had best be left alone. The conservative distrusts human motives. He believes durably in the sinfulness of man. Therefore he hesitates to aid the unemployed, for fear that a taste for unemployment would be the consequence. As the *Letter* puts it, "given the human proclivity for leisure, there is no easier way to make unemployment a permanent problem than extending and enlarging unemployment pay." Here is an evidence of consistent difference between conservatives and liberals: the first fear malingering; the second more generously, and probably more accurately, emphasize the human damage which unemployment causes. The conservative stresses the long run rather than the short, for he believes that short-run troubles are inevitable. But more than that, he is convinced that endeavors to alleviate them fail in the present and damage the prospects for economic growth in the future. Here the conservative frequently demonstrates an awareness of institutional realities which his liberal antagonist occasionally fails to achieve. A good part of the case against public works is, of course, based on a value judgment that individuals, wherever possible, should make their own choices of goods and services. In contrast, liberals can sometimes be found supporting larger communal expenditure on housing, schools, hospitals, and other medical care; their confidence in the capacity of a free enterprise system to evoke satisfactory levels of expenditure on such activities is limited. But much of the conservative case against public works has little to do with the value judgment. Government employees who administer the projects acquire vested interests in them, conservatives believe; as the need for them diminishes, they invent new reasons to justify their continuance. Builders and manufacturers of building materials constitute powerful pressure groups in favor of continued activity. Thus the conservative view attacks what might be called the hydraulic fallacy: that it is as easy to turn government spending on and off as to twist a faucet.

Similar emphasis on the long run characterizes the conservative position on taxes. Most present tax-cut proposals concentrate on increasing consumer spending. The *Let-*

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ter, on the contrary, emphasizes the need to increase permanently the incentive for business investment. In the face of some evidence to the contrary, the *Letter* assumes that the present tax structure inhibits investment and favors safe rather than risky projects. Its proposals for tax reform, then, are permanent, not temporary. In essence, they come to a reduction in the corporate income tax rate, and a severe moderation of the present degree of progression in the personal income tax. All of which suggests that where the liberal stresses the equity of high progression, the conservative emphasizes its unfavorable impact upon the incentives to work and invest. It is consistent with his emphasis upon the long run, and his fear that the momentum of human institutions, combined with the weakness of human reason, make temporary arrangements permanent burdens upon the future, that the conservative should fear inflation much more than he dreads unemployment. Enough has been said to indicate that this evaluation is not simply hard-hearted insensitivity to the sufferings of others. It is the clear result of belief in the inevitability of adversity joined to apprehension about the effects of government intervention to mitigate it.

Combined with these conclusions is a view of recent economic history. The conservative is disposed to believe that market adjustments can produce speedy recovery in the absence of massive government intervention. "The real solution to unemployment lies in the encouragement—not in the displacement—of private enterprise." More than that, the conservative views the Great Depression as a demonstration of the inadequacy of fiscal remedies. Where the liberal view might claim that Roosevelt's policies came too late, after four years of Hoover, and amounted to too little because of Roosevelt's own lack of consistent theory, the conservative draws a quite different moral from the same set of historical events: "This is a lesson we ought to take to heart out of the Great Depression. Billions upon billions spent by the Federal Government to make jobs still left 10,000,000 on the unemployment rolls" (the April *Letter*).

How far can these views be attributed to the administration? An administration is many people. Within it a Secretary of the Treasury may not necessarily agree with the Council of Economic Advisers, and George Humphrey, without title, may exercise more influence on economic policy than the combined titles of the administration. But this much is fair: the President's statements have demonstrated a consistent concern with long-run inflation and a persistent tendency to deprecate the importance of current unemployment. He refuses "to be panicked by alarmists into activities that could actually make the hardships of unemployment not temporary but chronic." He has emphasized his willingness to contemplate "tax reduction" if it will "assist healthy economic recovery." Obviously, the operative word is "healthy," and Mr. Eisenhower, in line with conservative opinion, is concerned more with the structure of the economy, in particular the relations between government and business, than he is with the immediate troubles of the people in that economy. Those ignorant of economics frequently seek refuge in the moral verities. Mr. Eisenhower is no exception. His tendency is to think of the recession as a problem of confidence and of confidence as a moral virtue. Parenthetically, it is worth noting how much nonsense is written and spoken about confidence. It is quite true that investment plans which risk funds on projects whose results may not be apparent for years to come reflect the optimism of the businessmen who make the plans. It is equally true that lack of orders, not lack of confidence, explains the plight of steel and autos. The manufacturers of the latter displayed enormous, though misplaced, confidence in their new models. Confidence flags when economic activity slows, and, although gloom may hasten contraction, it seldom if ever causes it.

What does all of this amount to? Although intelligent conservatives talk in the language that Lord Keynes made popular and, if pressed hard enough, may come to employ

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some of his remedies, their own preferences are for economic policies which antedate the Keynesian revolution in economic thought. This preference expresses itself in an extreme reluctance to cut taxes and increase public works expenditures. Joseph Alsop summarized the economic policy of this administration as one that hoped for the best without preparing for the worst. A fairer statement of the conservative position might be: intelligent abstention from hasty government action will prevent the worst.

Such, in summary, is conservative opinion. It mixes ideology with economic techniques. But so also does the liberal position—even though I find it the more appealing. The liberal politician and the liberal economist set different values on the danger of inflation and unemployment, and no reconciliation between them is likely. This is almost a re-enactment of the ancient divergence between emphasis on human rights and emphasis on property rights. The liberal, frequently underestimating the human costs of inflation, tends to center his attention and sympathy on the victims of unemployment. Obviously, the conservative would not avoid *any* inflation at the cost of *any* amount of unemployment, and the liberal would not suffer *any* degree of inflation to prevent the slightest amount of unemployment; but for the sweet sake of price stability the conservative will endure considerable unemployment, and for the sake of full employment the liberal will bear substantial inflation. Moreover, the liberal is inclined to see a recession as a problem in equity and an opportunity for social improvement. The ethical sensitivities of the liberal are much more likely to be affronted by extreme differences in income than are those of the conservative who may consider them the unequal rewards of unequal talents. When it comes to tax reduction, this value judgment leads the liberal to make the rate structure still more progressive on the ground that justice is best served by diminishing the degree of inequality which remains in the income distribution. As for the conservative, so for the liberal, tax policy affords an opportunity to promote a social objective which he values in all economic climates.

Morality is not all on one side. Some liberals have sounded in recent months as though they considered the recession a judgment on the bad taste of automobile manufacturers and the designers of other meretricious items. They turn with relief to a redirection of spending. The recession is a chance to promote a whole array of more desirable outlets for the resources of the nation: schools, hospitals, river development, aid to underdeveloped lands, scientific research. The catalogue is long and familiar. While the conservative suspects the usefulness of governmental activity, the liberal judges much private spending as wasteful, if not harmful. The liberal faces with equanimity the prospect of some government redirection of total spending.

Liberals and conservatives have in one way or another accused each other of lack of confidence in the American economy. The charges contain misstatements. Both have confidence: it is over the locus of the confidence that they differ. The conservative locates his in the resilience of an uncontrolled economy, the liberal in the belief that the government has the knowledge, the power, and the obligation to fight recession and advance social welfare. Seen in these terms, the political outlook for controlling recession is by no means as good as the state of economic knowledge might suggest. In what has gone before, we have identified a still influential group which does not accept the view of recession as a deficiency of spending and hence will not embrace the simple remedies which increase spending. In this group are to be found not only the President and the powerful Mr. Humphrey, but conceivably Secretary Anderson as well. The latter's favorable remarks about increased saving suggest not alone a distant economic perspective, but also a typically conservative emphasis upon thrift as a moral virtue. We must expect this group to resist fiscal measures, accept them only under severe pressure, and limit their scope as much as possible.

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Liberal attitudes also hamper prompt anti-recession action. The very openness of liberal confidence in anti-recession policy as a specific against not only recession but also a variety of social ills, tends to harden conservative resistance and to confirm conservatives in the opinion that fiscal policy is a thinly disguised mode of expanding the power of the state over the economic life of the community. Liberals who fight hard against recession *and* for social reform may keep the first and fail to secure the second. An obvious parallel suggests itself in the fate of the various school building bills which linked anti-segregation provisions to Federal aid. Segregation continues and Federal aid has been delayed. Some liberals, myself among them, would rather see no Federal aid if that aid supported continued segregation. But how many liberals are so attached to income redistribution as to pursue it—knowingly—at the cost of rapid action to limit recession?

This suggests that liberals ought to learn the hard lesson that effective anti-recession policy must be anti-recession policy *pur sang*. Only in this way can conservative fears be allayed and speedy action assured. The great danger alike for liberal influence and the general understanding of economics is this: the political warfare between liberals who combine economic and social objectives and conservatives who want little action, may delay fiscal action so long that when it comes it will be either inadequate or inordinately massive. Either result could scarcely fail to damage faith in our capacity to control economic fluctuations. Tax policy will be discredited, if a belated tax cut fails to stimulate spending because unemployment and apprehension have risen too high. Conservatives will triumph again in the end if the situation is restored by the sole means of a massive program of public works, for they will then be able to point to the huge expense and the enormous bureaucracy required to administer the program. Liberals cannot afford to forget one general rule: the earlier the intervention the greater the effect, and the longer the delay the more powerful must be the eventual intervention.

Concretely, what are the political implications of this diagnosis? They are self-restraint and self-limitation. Despite his ethical preferences, the sensible liberal, economist or politician, will favor a tax cut which as far as possible benefits equally all income groups and all interest groups. Ideally, every group's position in relation to other groups should be left unchanged. The liberal must put up with the inequities of our current tax system and wait to remedy them. He must grit his teeth at the sight of Texas millionaires rich on oil depletion allowances.

When it comes to public works, the liberal should not allow his eagerness for public improvement to lead him to advocate public works prematurely. Nor should his social preferences dictate the composition of these public works when they do become necessary. This is hard doctrine. For it implies that in choosing between a highway program and a school aid program, the liberal might be led in the interests of speedy action to favor the former. This is a direct corollary of the point made in the preceding paragraph. Quick tax reduction depends upon the maintenance of relative positions. Speedy agreement on public works implies building those projects which create no disagreement because they threaten the interests of no group. If in the end these narrow down to roads and post offices, then the liberal had better put aside his preferences and, with a sigh, accept a low common denominator, out of fear that he get neither roads nor schools.

What this recession has served to demonstrate is how strong old attitudes are, how superficial agreement on economic policy has been, and how prone all parties are to mix their social preferences with their economic policies. Only the imprudent venture a prediction in the pages of a monthly magazine. Therefore, I say no more than this: whatever additional economic policies will be employed in the near future, however deep the recession becomes, our economic policy to the end of April has demonstrated, not the inadequacy of economic techniques, but the unwisdom of mixing social and economic objectives in anti-recession policy.

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BOMBING IN MIAMI

Anti-Semitism and the Segregationists

NATHAN PERLMUTTER

THE dull boom in the evening of March 16, unusual but not frightening, that announced the bombing of the Nashville Jewish Community Center echoed the thunder blast that eighteen hours earlier, in the hushed stillness of 2:30 in the morning, shattered Miami's Temple Beth El school annex.

In Miami the damage was extensive. The explosion tore a gaping hole in the concrete rear wall of the school. It hurled a section of iron railing, cemented to the rear steps of the building, one hundred and fifteen yards onto the roof of a private home. The school's roof and walls were lifted from their foundations. In Nashville a lady had thought that the sound of the explosion was her next-door neighbor's traveling bags dropping to the floor. In Miami most of the shaken neighbors said their first thought was that an airplane had crashed.

The detonation, originally estimated as the product of twelve sticks of dynamite, later at approximately twenty sticks, flushed excited, night-clothed residents out of their homes into the Sunday morning dark as police cars, fire engines, and ambulances screamed into the blast area. Fearful of panic if word of a "synagogue bombing" raced through the alarmed neighborhood, police told the gathering crowd that it had been a gas explosion. The explosive charge had already been located, however—wrapped, ironically enough, in paper *yarmelkes,* stolen from an outside storage bin.

That it was not a gas explosion but an act of premeditated violence was announced within twenty minutes after the explosion to two separate parties. Rabbi Abraham Levitan, in no way connected with Temple Beth El, was jarred from sleep by an insistent telephone. In what he described as a German or a foreign accent, his caller warned that if Rabbi Levitan did not stop preaching integration in his synagogue it would suffer the same fate as Temple Beth El. Soon after the call to Rabbi Levitan the phone in the complaint room of the Miami Police Department started ringing. The desk officer picked up the receiver, was informed of the explosion, and was advised that more bombings would follow unless "segregation" or "integration" was stopped in Miami—the officer wasn't sure which term the caller used. Both telephone calls were made before the newspapers knew about the blast, or if they were aware of it, before they knew it was caused by something other than a gas explosion.

In Nashville, too, within fifteen minutes of the bombing, a rabbi, William B. Silverman, received a telephone call. His caller, "a member of the Confederate Union," boasted of the dynamiting, warned that the Rabbi's temple would suffer the same fate that "any other nigger-loving place or nigger-loving person" would However, the parallelism present in the Miami and Nashville bombings requires a footnote. The Jewish Community Center in Nashville had been visited by Negroes as guests of the Red Cross and other organizations which met at the Center building. Rabbi Silverman himself,

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THE attempt to inject anti-Semitism into the struggle over desegregation presently convulsing the South has been signalized by a series of bombing attempts on Southern Jewish religious institutions. Last month Jackson Toby reported on the "Bombing in Nashville." Here NATHAN PERLMUTTER discusses the Miami bombing. Mr. Perlmutter is director of the Florida office of the Anti-Defamation League and has written for the *New Leader, Nation, Progressive,* and other magazines. He contributed "Evangelist Demagogue, 1952 Model" to our number of October 1952.

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while not connected with the Center, had voiced clear opinions that were anathema to hoodlum extremists. The crime in Nashville, in the eyes of its perpetrators, was an act of retaliation for the offense of "desegregation."

But Temple Beth El is Orthodox, all the way. There are temples in Miami and in Miami Beach from whose pulpits their rabbis have discussed the desegregation issue. Study groups have listened to speakers on the subject and held group discussions, moving on to book reviews of *Marjorie Morningstar*. Not so Temple Beth El. The bulk of its congregation are quiet, elderly people for whom the synagogue is strictly a place for worship. (Rabbi Shmaryahu Swirsky, former spiritual leader of Temple Beth El, once said to me: "Sometimes there is a knock on my study door, and I pray, I pray hard that when I say 'Come in,' there will enter a young face. Do you realize, can you realize, how many weeks on end go by without my seeing a young face, how much we in Orthodoxy are in the company of *old* people?") The Miami crime, even by the lights of its own perpetrators, was clearly a case of knocking at the wrong door.

THE news of Sunday morning's bombing was reported in Monday morning's Miami *Herald*. That was March 17. But by that time the predictable reactions to the bombing were already in. Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish leaders called Sidney Palmer, President of Beth El, with offers of help. The police poured full-strength resources into the investigation. Unmarked night patrols were posted around the synagogues of Greater Miami. Radio Station WQAM offered a $1,000 reward for information leading to the conviction of the culprits. A cash reward was offered by a Veterans of Foreign Wars post and the national Jewish War Veterans. Individuals posted offers of small rewards. Meanwhile, as churches in the Beth El area volunteered the use of their classrooms for the bombed school's students, Harry Cohen, Florida commander of the Jewish War Veterans, diverted miscellaneous veterans from assuming personal responsibility for protecting synagogues. On the morning of March 17, the Miami *Herald* called the dynamiting "a disgraceful incident," and soberly observed: "There must be no jumping to conclusions. Placing of the motive behind this criminal act might well serve as a guide to law enforcement officials to forestall repetition."

That afternoon, the Miami *News* wondered editorially whether more violence for Miami was in store. With an eye north to Nashville, it surmised: "There is now reason to believe that Sunday's bombing may be part of a reign of terror planned for the South by the White Citizens Councils. Whether the plans are born locally or are part of a nationwide scheme, the important thing is to stop them." On the same afternoon, the liaison committee of the American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League convened at the call of the committee's respective co-chairmen, David Fleeman, prominent local contractor, and Paul Seiderman, one-time New York Rackets Bureau chief. Immediately broadening itself to include the Rabbinical Association of Greater Miami, the American Jewish Congress, and the Jewish War Veterans, the committee issued a statement to member agencies of the Combined Jewish Appeal. Assurances were given that the police were conducting a thorough investigation, that information from the files of the agencies had been shared with the police, and that all pertinent information would be shared with the organized Jewish community.

By March 21, only five short days after the bombing, the story seemed to have just about run its course. But the Nashville bombing earlier, and subsequently the bombing, in Jacksonville, of the Jewish Center Synagogue and the Negro James Weldon Johnson School on April 28, and the bombing attempt on Temple Beth El in Birmingham (the dynamite did not go off), also on April 28, made it appear most unlikely that the Miami blast was a mere accident or one-shot affair.

For the old-timers in Greater Miami—and seven years' residence in that boom town

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makes one an old-timer—a Miami *News* editorial of six years ago rang hollowly: "While the investigation is being pressed, it is up to the public to remain calm. True, no relaxing of the probe must be permitted. . . . Arrest of those responsible for the bombings must come. But finding them is, at best, a difficult task and calls for the patience and forbearance of the public." The date of that editorial was December 31, 1951. In a rash of violence ten different explosions had rocked Negro and Jewish edifices and a Catholic Church. All the crimes, as well as the Christmas 1951 bomb-slaying of Harry Moore, NAACP official of Mims, Florida, remain unsolved. "Patience and forbearance" had prevailed.

At this writing, the bombing of Miami's Temple Beth El also remains unsolved. Police investigations have reached as far north as Pompano Beach and have covered an area of two hundred miles. Southeastern Florida, the state's Gold Coast, is a busy hive of construction. Construction jobs require dynamite—in the coral-based earth of Florida, exceptionally large quantities of it. In their attempt to trace the dynamite and through it the criminals, the police have discovered, to their dismay, that stealing unguarded dynamite from construction jobs after dark requires little more surreptitiousness than does trespassing. Questioning of activist extremists in the segregation movement and others continues. Involved in the investigation are the Miami Police Dept., the Miami Beach Police Dept., and the Sheriff's office. In addition, State's Attorney Richard E. Gerstein, the young prosecutor who last year picked up, interrogated, and publicly exposed John Kasper, dramatically declared his office's official interest in the bombing by convening the three law enforcement agencies and co-ordinating their activities. More recently, the newly appointed Dade County Grand Jury has been charged with investigating the Beth El bombing.

As WITH any crime, the determination of motive is perhaps the first step along the road to solution. For days one phase of the investigation revolved around belief that the bombing might have been an "inside job." Beth El, police discovered, was divided into bickering camps. Indeed, some days before the devastating blast, its rabbi had resigned to assume a new post. This hypothesis was not, however, borne out by investigation. Somewhere along the line police learned for themselves that when Jews in a synagogue fall out with one another, the losing faction does not bomb the *shul* but builds another one. Another notion, that the bombing was an act of intimidation perpetrated by anti-Semites, *has* persisted. For in addition to bombs having served over the years as a kind of signature for psychopathic racists, and in addition to the racist telephone calls made in both Nashville and Miami hard on the heels of the detonations, the bombing method used in both cities suggests planned intimidation rather than wantonness.

In Nashville, only two hours before the explosion, the Center had been crowded with families and children; it is easy to imagine the carnage that might have resulted if the bombs had gone off earlier than they did. Also, had the bombers set their charges in a different place, the building would have been completely demolished. For in order to get to the door where the dynamite charge was placed, the criminals had to pass an alleyway where they must have observed two open windows leading into the boiler room—if they had chosen to toss the dynamite through these windows, which are open at all times to allow fumes to escape, the building would have been completely destroyed. In the Miami case, too, had the bombers used burlap, had they chosen to place their charge somewhat differently, the entire structure would have been leveled. Seeing that both crimes strongly suggest the handiwork of men who know their trade well, the theory that the acts were warnings or attempts to intimidate remains a working premise for the investigation.

The violence of 1951, the telephone calls to Rabbi Silverman and Rabbi Levitan, the manner in which the charges were set in Nashville and in Miami, and indeed the

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bombing attempts in Charlotte and Gastonia, North Carolina, in November 1957 and February 1958, respectively—all these point plainly enough to the existence of a racist motive (though one must always bear in mind the possibility that in the end the Nashville and Miami bombings were coincidental. If organized racism lies behind the bombings, is there a social ferment in the South today producing these acts of violence and the more recent bombing attempts at Jacksonville and Birmingham, and can we expect the Southern ferment to produce further acts of racially motivated violence?

In the past two years Florida has been inundated with inflammatory hate literature. Bulk shipments of *Common Sense*, published by Conde McGinley of Union, New Jersey, and of the *American Nationalist*, published by Frank Britton of Inglewood, California, arrive regularly. Some of it is distributed at meetings of Klan groups and of some White Citizens Councils. Much of it turns up in anonymous mailings postmarked in Sarasota, St. Petersburg, Tampa, and Miami. Invariably the material hysterically relates "mongrelization" of the white race to a "Jew" or "Jew-Zionist" or "Jew-Zionist-Communist" plot. Often, locally mimeographed or printed efforts are enclosed as mail fillers. The mailings range from handsomely printed and colored window stickers reminding readers that it is the Jew and not the Negro who threatens Southern ways, and that Arthur Spingarn, President of the NAACP, is Jewish, not Negro, to crudely mimeographed paper sheets with the legend:

Join the Jewish
Kommunist Kremlin Kikes

HELP SAVE THE WORLD FOR THE NEGROES AND THE jews

The literature is mailed in huge batches and in sometimes seemingly indiscriminate fashion. Jews are often included in the mailing lists. Attorneys, shopkeepers, newspapermen, state and local officials are regularly solicited. In some instances the mailings are signed and go beyond the mere expression of group libels. One such, a Florida KKK recruitment letter which enjoyed currency in Nashville, provided Miami police with an early lead. It assured parents of school-age children that at meetings of Klan cells to which they were being invited, "There will be bomb lessons and how to handle fire and gasoline"; the letter was signed, "M. B. Sherrill, Grand Imperial Wizard." M. B. Sherrill is currently chairman of the St. Lucie county White Citizens Council of Florida.

In Florida it is mainly the rural, or "cracker," world for which this fare is provided, one whose traditional hostility toward the big city is further excited by a fundamentalist envy and scorn for the pleasure domes of Miami Beach. It is a world intruded upon by a remote, taloned and scaled dragon, the Supreme Court; it is a world shaken by the vibrations of South Florida urbanization; its confusion and resentment are part and parcel of the persecuted minority complex which the South has felt since before the Civil War. The cracker—it is a term of prideful self-description—has lived with Negroes all his life and consequently "knows" that they are incapable of being responsible for the social revolution decreed in the Supreme Court's school decisions. The domestic and field hands he has known, who have deferred to him and mistered him and assured him of their lack of interest in integration, cannot be projected into the image of mover and shaker in Washington, D. C. The outsiders who have wrought fleshy Miami Beach, the outsiders with the New York money and the secret influence in Washington, D. C., far more credibly fit that role. The bully who, bomb in hand, does battle with that enemy is socially undesirable, but he *is* fighting an acknowledged invader, he is fighting *back*. He is fighting the entire cracker-world's battle—he is, so to speak, an underground fighter in a "people's war."

A year ago last March I stepped into this "embattled" world. The Ku Klux Klan in Florida had staged a series of rallies ranging in size from audiences of three to seven hun-

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dred. John Kasper was in Florida and he was featured as a guest speaker at a Klan rally in Inverness, some sixty miles north of Tampa, in the middle of the "cracker" country. I attended the rally with Robert S. Bird of the New York *Herald Tribune*. Here is his description of the setting:

> The speaker stood on a small wooden platform under a grove of live oak trees festooned with Spanish moss at the edge of a big field. At either side of the platform two 10-foot wooden crosses were flaming and a row of torches was set in a semi-circle around the platform. These were smudge pots that gave off both light and a misty, theatrical smoke. Standing guard around the platform were six robed, hooded and masked figures, in white garb, in crimson and blue.
>
> The flames bathed the thickly moss draped oaks in a ghostly light and revealed in several of the trees the loud speakers that were carrying the oratorical virulence out into the Florida night.
>
> Immediately in front of the platform was ranged a half-circle of about 70 men and women in ordinary Saturday night clothes. There were many in zipper jackets, slacks and work pants. Men predominated, especially younger men. In the circle of the fire bath, about 100 automobiles were parked in three rows on the edge of a field which stretched far into the shadowy distance. Some 200 persons, none of them in Klan regalia, sat in their cars in the manner of an audience at a drive-in movie theatre.
>
> The night was chill and the star-spangled vault of the Florida heavens seemed contrived for the occasion. Even the half moon that was climbing into the skies gave off nothing more than a pale malevolence that only enhanced the eeriness of the scene.

The rally was a segregationist one. The loudest exclamations, however, the auto-honking that filled the night air, were in response not to anti-Negro but to anti-Semitic diatribes.

"If Ike wants to involve us in the Middle East, instead of sending Americans out there let him send American Yids to fight for Israel."

"God stamped ugliness on the face of the Jew for the same reason that he put rattlers on the snake."

"We don't hate the good nigger. A good nigger is black on the outside, but a Jew is white on the outside and black inside. We've got to segregate the Jew to the same second class citizenship that the nigger thinks he has but don't really have."

Whereas mention of "niggers" seemed to call forth no more than strong disapproval in the mob, the terms "Jew," "Yid," "Kike," and "Zionist" caused them to stir angrily.

THAT the active Klan is a small, tawdry, dwindling affair perhaps requires restating. At the same time it must be remembered that racial violence is generally the work of tawdry, miniscule minorities, social criminals acting out of conviction rather than ordinary criminals seeking profit or vengeance—individual extremists who rise for a stark, dramatic moment from a class or group *in extremis*. But it would be error to view the Klan only as an isolated extremist group. To do so would lead too facilely to the conclusion that the Klan can be snuffed out by proscription against its existence or by incarceration of its leaders. The Klan today represents much more a state of mind than it does an organization. It is a distraught and desperate state of mind, excited by and in tune with the call to "massive resistance" vociferated by the dominant political leaders of the South. Indeed, the segregation-at-all-costs theme of the Klan and its city cousins, the White Citizens Councils, is so in tune with much of the prevailing respectable Southern political expression that one is sometimes hard put to it to distinguish their voice in the chorus. The Klan and the White Citizens Councils must therefore be viewed as an integral part of the Southern "massive resistance" to desegregation rather than as isolated, dissident groups.

Today, the distinguishing, unique contribution of the Klan and of many White Citizens Councils to the South's "total war" is—anti-Semitism. The tolerance accorded to this anti-Semitism helps to spread it. This was evidenced some months ago in Pensacola, Florida, a city which for some time now has been receiving large mailings of hate literature. Rear Admiral John G. Crommelin, Jr., retired, a forceful advocate of the White

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Citizens Councils, was addressing the local Daughters of the American Revolution at that time. Four hundred ladies were present, the city's social, political, and financial elite on the distaff side. The Admiral, discussing segregation among other subjects, launched a tirade against a "hidden force" of "Zionist individuals," and proposed to overcome this "force" with Christian principles "in a bloodless way, if possible." He cited Kol Nidre, repeating the old canard that the prayer requires a renunciation of all other vows and oaths a Jew might make. "Many Jews are members of the Masons," he continued. "They took long oaths before joining this organization. Which set of oaths are we to believe they are violating?" he pointedly queried. At the close of his remarks, two ladies left. One was Jewish, the other the wife of a Jew. The rest of the audience remained. There was goodly applause, there were questions, all friendly, there was no apology, then or later, for the speaker's remarks. One can be sure that many of the ladies present must have been offended; but they bore their hurt silently. Their silence was only a small part of the omnipresent silence that envelopes the "moderate" South today, a silence that gives encouragement to the demagogue and a kind of left-handed countenance to lawless acts of violence.

Sometimes the silent ones have an opportunity to speak—in the privacy of the polling booth. In Florida, they spoke clearly for the "moderate" segregationist, Governor LeRoy Collins. But 125,000 votes were also cast for the second-runner, General Sumter Lowry, candidate of the White Citizens Councils. That is a goodly sized extremist group—anywhere. Sometimes the silence is shattered by a bomb, and then everybody starts talking at once—about the Klan and not about "massive resistance," nor their own silence of a moment ago, nor the symbiotic relation the Klan state of mind enjoys with that of the respectable South today. But even so it requires the bombing of a "Jewish church" or two to break the silence. In the past eighteen months there have been fully two score bombings in the South of Negro homes and Negro institutions. These blasts echoed fleetingly and then were quickly swallowed in the customary silence.

Hopefully, the bombings of Jewish institutions have served to rouse the silent South to the danger posed by the extremists in its midst—if so, it is ironical that the Southern Jew, whose own silence has been so pronounced and emphatic, should serve as the alarm bell.

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KHRUSHCHEV IN COMMAND

The Party Reasserts Its Supremacy

RICHARD LOWENTHAL

WHEN Nikita Khrushchev, First Secretary of the Communist party of the Soviet Union, had himself elected Minister President by the Supreme Soviet on March 27, 1958, he served notice on Russia and the world that the five years' crisis of succession which followed Stalin's death was over and done with. The pretense of collective leadership, once an expression of a real need for compromise among rival leaders and later a useful fiction, had now become a useless impediment and a source of weakness: it was time for everybody to realize that the Soviet Union had a single ruler again—a dictator whose decisions could not be challenged by his critics because his power was not limited by institutions.

In fact, of course, the succession crisis had ended five months earlier, when the Central Committee confirmed Marshal Zhukov's removal from control of the armed forces and his expulsion from its own ranks. The elimination of the last potential rival of the First Secretary—the last man, that is, who controlled the levers of a potentially independent power machine—completed at the same time the reassertion of monolithic control by the party machine itself. The final victory of the single leader coincided with the renewed triumph of the single party—the end of the crisis of succession spelt a new lease of life for the totalitarian regime.

In terms of the party machine itself, Khrushchev's victory had already been complete by the time of the 20th Congress in February 1956. Having gained a flying start when Malenkov was removed from the party secretariat within a week of his assumption of the premiership in March 1953; having helped to emancipate the party from the secret police by the overthrow of Beria in June 1953; having been confirmed as First Secretary in September of the same year; and having used his powers of appointment to such effect that by the beginning of 1955 he was able to replace Malenkov at the head of the government by his own nominee—Khrushchev was in a position to pack both the party congress and the new Central Committee with a crushing majority of his protégés and supporters. If his principal rivals and potential opponents were nevertheless re-elected to the presidium of the new Central Committee, this was done in deference to their personal standing and to the *social* weight of the bureaucratic strata they represented; in strictly inner-party terms they remained on sufferance only.

Logically, the two crises of 1957—the elimination from the party presidium of Malenkov, Molotov, and Kaganovich at the end of June, and of Zhukov at the beginning of November—turned on the reassertion of the party machine's control over the corresponding sectors of the state machine—the economic bureaucracy and the army. The spokesmen of the former were defeated in an open political struggle on Khrushchev's policy for the reorganization of industrial planning; the leader of the latter was caught unawares when his bid for greater independence from party control, and his campaign against the surviving accomplices of Stalin's blood purge of the armed forces, was still in the early stage, and probably before he himself had realized that such a campaign could only

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be successful if it aimed at replacing the primacy of the party by that of the army. By his preventive stroke, Khrushchev destroyed the one remaining potential check on his own power.

Khrushchev, then, is Stalin's uncontested heir. Like Stalin before him, he has eliminated all potential rivals within five years, and has done so without bloodshed—as Stalin did at that stage. Like Stalin, he has won by using the party machine as the decisive lever of power, and his victory consolidates once again the totalitarian regime after a period of divided authority and uncertainty of direction. Finally, just as Stalin took over the basic objectives of Lenin—objectives implicit in the nature of single-party rule consecrated by an ideology—so Khrushchev has taken over the basic objectives of Stalin.

But as Stalin was not another Lenin, so Khrushchev is not another Stalin. Apart even from all the differences in their personalities, Lenin's heir had to adapt his methods and policies to a different historical situation—to the isolation of the Soviet state in a non-revolutionary world, to the task of "building socialism in a single country," i.e. of maintaining the dictatorship of his party in the name of "socialism," while carrying out ruthlessly the industrialization of a poor and backward country. Even so, Stalin's heir has to adapt *his* methods and policies to the different historical situation in which he finds himself today. For while the struggle for the succession is over, the international, economic, and social problems that have come to light during the crisis remain. Khrushchev today has to rule a Soviet Union different from that of Stalin, to lead a different Soviet bloc, and to maneuver in a different world power constellation. The resulting policy changes are greater inside Russia than within the Soviet bloc, and greater within the bloc than in relation to the non-Communist world. But they are discernible in all three fields.

THE end of the succession crisis has meant the restoration of the party's supremacy over all branches of the state machine. It has insured that the party's unending effort to use state power for molding society according to its preconceived notions of the road to Communism—what has been termed the "permanent revolution from above"—will continue. Yet the power of party and state to force their will on Soviet society is no longer as absolute as in Stalin's time: though free from institutional checks or legal impediments, it is now limited by hard economic and social facts. The massive use of force in the daily processes of economic life, so characteristic of Stalin's methods, could only yield the desired results under primitive conditions—under conditions, that is, of a high birth rate, a pressing over-population in agriculture, and a limited importance of industrial skills. Where there is no practical limit to exploitation; where skill, care, initiative are important for a limited number of jobs only, a rapid succession of starving generations will build the new towns and roads, the new railways, factories, and mines required, as effectively (and more cheaply) as would a well-fed, well-trained, and comparatively long-lived modern working class. But once natural population growth and influx from the countryside slow down, once it becomes more important to operate modern machinery than to build the outward scaffolding of industry, the emphasis inevitably turns to quality of performance and productivity per manshift—and hence from coercion to incentives in economic life.

All this is of no immediate relevance for the issue of totalitarian *political* power: as Mr. Bertram Wolfe has pointed out, the example of Hitler Germany has shown that despotism can flourish in a highly developed industrial country as well as in a primitive Oriental economy. But it is highly relevant for the impact of the totalitarian regime on the daily lives of the mass of the population, for not even the most powerful despot can run modern factories—or for that matter modern dairy farms—with the methods by which the pyramids were built. That is why state slavery, which played a vital part in the Stalinist economy, remained a marginal wartime phenomenon in the economy of the Third Reich, and why it is being reduced to

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a marginal role in the Soviet Union today.

There have, of course, always been incentives in the Soviet economy for the skilled minority—the Stakhanov workers and model collective farms, not to mention the technical and managerial intelligentsia—just as there is still economic coercion against "vagrants" and "idlers" today as part of the ultimate sanctions of social and political discipline. But the over-all shift from coercion to incentives is a basic and irreversible trend of the post-Stalinist economy—the common denominator underlying all those reforms of the past five years which may be expected to last because they were induced by fundamental social changes which the political crisis merely allowed to come to the surface. These reforms comprise the transformation of most of the slave labor camps into forced settlements for legally free workers who live with their families and receive normal wages; the abolition of the "labor book" for free workers; the granting of improved minimum wages and of pensions; and the drastic reduction of forced delivery quotas, plus an increase in state prices for the produce of the collective farmers. Together, these measures have transformed the lives of the bulk of the Soviet population, however poor the standard attained even now by large portions of them may be. What is more, they have limited the power of the dictatorship in a manner unforeseen by the manipulators of the "permanent revolution from above"; for the planned dynamism of the latter now encounters an unplanned dynamism which flows from the requirements of continued economic growth—requirements which in their competitive struggle against other industrial powers the rulers can ignore only at their peril.

KHRUSHCHEV and his propagandists would of course deny that any such contradictions between their doctrinal concepts and the requirements of continued economic growth exist. On the contrary, they would claim that the post-Stalin economic reforms are the living proof of the correctness of their doctrine, the fulfillment of their promise that the sacrifices made for the sake of rapid industrialization would in due course bear fruit in improved living standards. But apart from their own doctrinaire resistance against such improvements (so vividly expressed in the overthrow of Malenkov in 1955 for his alleged excessive concern with higher output of consumer goods) there exists now a classic example of how the masters of an all-powerful state are being forced by the logic of economics to deviate from the road mapped out by their doctrine: the decision to sell to the collective farms the bulk of the machinery hitherto concentrated in the state-owned Machine Tractor Stations (MTS), and the implied further decision to abandon the system of payments in kind and to place future relations between the collective farms and the state entirely on a cash basis. This is a revolutionary decision, bound to exert an influence on the structure of Soviet society no less profound than the transformation of the slave camp system, and the recent reorganization of industrial planning. But it cannot by any stretch of the imagination be described as a revolution according to plan—as part of the transition to Communism foreseen in the theory. For Communist theory had hitherto always insisted that state property constitutes the "higher form" of socialization, in which collective property —the "lower form"—would in due course be absorbed, whereas the present reform consists in turning over the decisive means of agricultural production from state ownership to collective ownership; and Communist theory, as summed up, for instance, in Stalin's 1952 pamphlet on "Economic Problems of Socialism," called for a steady replacement of market exchanges between town and country by organized barter, whereas the present reform tends to replace the one major element of organized barter—the payments in kind made by the collective farms to the MTS in return for their services—by sales against cash to the state trading organizations.

The reasons for the adoption of this highly official, if somewhat shamefaced, form of "revisionism" may be summed up in two

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words: efficiency and incentives. The whole series of reform measures introduced in Soviet agriculture since Stalin's death have been geared to the double objective of getting the peasants to produce and deliver more by granting them higher incomes, without permanently increasing the cost to the state per unit—to achieve higher production by better prices, and then lower costs by increased productivity. Yet while a considerable increase in output was in fact achieved, it proved impossible to make a rational calculation of production costs, let alone to lower them. The more intense the search of the Soviet leaders for methods which would lower agricultural cost without taking the peasants' new incentives away, the more obvious the need for concentrating all the means of production under one authority. At the 1956 party Congress, Mikoyan openly warned against the tendency to extend the sphere of barter and insisted on the expansion of domestic trade as an indispensable stimulus to rational accounting; while Khrushchev has repeatedly urged the *kolkhoz* managements to pay their members fixed monthly cash advances on their share. The decision to allow the collective farms to buy their own machinery is clearly a decisive step on the road to a rational cash economy in agriculture, and will in turn accelerate other steps: the government will now have to replace the former system of agricultural procurement by more strictly economic methods of state purchase, probably at a single price instead of the present gradation for different quotas; the factories producing agricultural machinery, instead of "distributing" unwanted machinery to the MTS, will have to enter into genuine market relationships with their new customers, the collective farms; and the latter, called upon under the decree to pay the two million tractorists and mechanics whom they will have to take over from the MTS their accustomed wages and pensions, will be under increased pressure to assure an equally stable cash minimum to their own members.

When Stalin was faced with similar proposals in the last year of his life, he termed them a "retrograde step." And indeed the new policy strengthens collective farm property at the expense of centrally administered distribution, and dispenses with the principal lever of state and party pressure in the countryside. Are we then to conclude that Khrushchev has jettisoned doctrine for the sake of efficiency? Not at all. For not only are Khrushchev and his propagandists busy explaining that theirs is really a better way of reaching the final goal of turning all collective farm property into national property—they mean it, and they act upon it. A collective farm whose members receive a guaranteed minimum wage is already very close in structure to a state farm. Clearly, it will come closer to it the bigger the revenue that has to be reinvested. A confusing picture? Yet the essence is simple: continuity in doctrinaire aims—flexibility in the choice of means. Any analysis which takes account only of the continuity, or of the new realism, would be misleading. The actual evolution of Soviet society, even now that the succession crisis has ended, is no longer the simple imposition on that society of a preconceived scheme by the totalitarian state: it takes place in a series of forced compromises between the will of the ruling party and the spontaneous development of society, between the logic of total power and the logic of economic and social growth. The resulting picture is perhaps more likely to resemble the zigzags of the 20's—the NEP under Lenin and the early years of Stalin—than the steamroller movement of fully developed Stalinism.

FROM another angle, this means that the "permanent revolution from above" may enter a less violent phase. The most serious reason for believing this is not the weakening of the secret police—which was a by-product of the succession struggle and could in principle be reserved—nor Khrushchev's recent record and presumed personal intentions; but rather the certainty that large-scale violence would be harmful to economic growth at a stage when the pace of such growth is crucial for Russia's position as a

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world power. Khrushchev's repudiation of the Stalinist doctrine on the constant sharpening of the class struggle has lately been expanded by official ideologists to the conclusion that during the transition to "Communism" all the remaining contradictions are "non-antagonistic," and can be solved by gradual, evolutionary methods. But while this outlook is clearly in harmony with Khrushchev's optimistic temperament, it is for this very reason unlikely to survive a major setback. The Soviet regime today has less *need* to use terrorism than in Stalin's time; but so long as the totalitarian state exists, it remains *capable* of reacting to serious difficulties by employing its *ultima ratio*.

No comparable change has occurred in the relations between the Soviet regime and the non-Communist world. The renewed consolidation of the party dictatorship insures that the fundamental character of these relations will remain the same as in Lenin's time—one of irreconcilable hostility, or to use the modern term, of cold war; for the existence of powerful foreign opponents remains the indispensable justification of the totalitarian regime—all the more so if it endeavors to solve its domestic problems without constant resort to mass terrorism against "internal enemies." Yet certain limitations upon the exercise of totalitarian state power have always been present in the field of foreign policy, owing to the existence of powerful non-Communist states. Of late the situation has become more fluid, thanks to the development of thermonuclear weapons and inter-continental missiles, and the consequent establishment of a "balance of terror." Whatever one's estimate of the marginal advantages still held by either side, the likelihood is that the "balance of terror" will last for the politically foreseeable time, and Soviet foreign policy under Khrushchev is clearly geared to this assumption.

The impact of this realization upon the Soviet leaders has been a considerable degree of "freedom from fear": for despite their propagandist speculation on mass hysteria elsewhere, they clearly do not believe that the "imperialists" will deliberately start a world war. Since the launching of the Sputniks, this new sense of security has been expressed in the abandonment of the old formula about "capitalist encirclement," on the grounds that it is no longer clear who is encircling whom. The over-all result has been to enable the Soviet leaders to take a more rational view of world affairs, without making them in the least inclined to grant concessions to their principal opponents. Perhaps the most important single change (in which Communist China was the pacemaker before it was fully adopted by Russia at the 20th Congress), has been the belated recognition that the new, ex-colonial nations of Asia and Africa are truly independent, and that diplomatic and economic wooing of these "uncommitted" countries offers better prospects of success than the traditional efforts to play the Western powers off against each other. At the same time, there has been a distinct increase of faith in the chances of Communist victories occurring abroad without direct Soviet support. Yet in one important respect Soviet diplomacy has recently returned to Stalin's methods: the use of local military threats, open or implied.

WHEN the campaign for "peaceful coexistence" was first launched after Stalin's death, it did not imply an abandonment of cold war politics, but it did suggest an effort to liquidate local wars and to renounce the kind of military pressure which served to keep the neighbors of the Soviet bloc under the threat of local war. The purpose was to "relax tension" and thus to reduce the armament burden, to weaken the cohesion of the NATO powers and their willingness to arm, and to win sympathy among the uncommitted nations. This policy led to the liquidation of the Korean and Indo-Chinese wars, the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Finland and Austria, and reached its climax with the Geneva summit meeting of 1955. Beginning with the international crisis in the fall of 1956—Hungary and Suez—and continuing more systematical-

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ly since the launching of the first Sputnik, Soviet diplomacy has returned to the use of military pressure. The Hungarian massacre might be regarded as a special case, but the campaign of threats against Turkey over a "Syrian crisis" deliberately engineered by Russia, and the series of threats to the NATO powers, to prevent them from accepting the installation of missile sites on their territory, bear all the marks of a general policy deliberately chosen. One must conclude that the Soviets consider the balance of power to have changed so much in their favor that from now on the advantages of intimidation are likely to outweigh the disadvantages of appearing as a bully. The new combination of "Stalinist" threats, not with "Stalinist" caution, but with Khrushchevian overconfidence, may be of particular importance in favoring an adventurous policy in the Middle East.

The broad picture, then, is of Soviet confidence in a gradual advance to the world-wide victory of Communism by a combination of colonial conflicts, revolutions, and local wars or threats of war where these can be undertaken without serious risk. Yet there is a vulnerable area where popular forces pressing for social and political change have clearly been moving against Soviet interests: Eastern Europe. A list of the preoccupations of Soviet diplomacy would have to begin with the persistent danger of political explosions in that region which might come to involve the security of the Soviet Union itself; and it would have to include the over-all burden of armaments, and more particularly the manpower burden and the risk of the spread of nuclear arms to more non-Communist states, including neighbors of the Soviet bloc. Any glance at the Soviet draft agenda for a new summit conference will confirm this picture; one may add that the proposal to replace the traditional four-power framework by one involving three governments on each side, expresses both the Soviet desire to demonstrate that they are now fully the equals in strength of their opponents, and their interest in symbolic recognition of the East European status quo. Yet the Kremlin's basic attitude to a summit meeting is, for all the noisy propaganda, somewhat relaxed, for the Soviet leaders clearly feel that they are anyhow on the offensive in world affairs.

THERE remains the problem of over-all Communist direction. The struggle for the succession in the Soviet Union has been accompanied by a severe convulsion within the Soviet bloc. Here, too, Stalin's methods of insuring ideological and political unity under Soviet leadership had long proved irrational; and the very attempt to change them brought all the unsolved problems into the open and precipitated the crisis of 1956. Here, too, a consolidation of Soviet leadership seemed to have been achieved by Khrushchev when a joint declaration of principles by twelve "ruling" Communist parties was published last November. But in this field consolidation has proved more apparent than real, and the commitment to new, non-Stalinist methods remains precarious. Stalin had been aware that the rise of other sovereign Communist powers would constitute a danger to the unity of the Communist world. Soviet leadership of world Communism was to be a permanent article of faith, embodied in the discipline of a world party with its center in Moscow, and backed by the dominant role of Soviet state power. This concept was fully implemented in satellite Eastern Europe, where both the Communist conquest of power and the subsequent forcible transformation of the social structure were carried out under Soviet orders; but it was openly and successfully resisted by the Yugoslav Communists, and only nominally accepted by the Chinese, both of whom had conquered power primarily by their own efforts and in repeated defiance of Soviet advice. Moreover, the practical application of Stalinist control in satellite Europe led to a degree of Soviet exploitation which was bound to prove harmful to Soviet interests in the long run. After Stalin's death, the Soviet leaders set themselves the objective of removing the irrational features of Soviet control over the satellites, while maintaining

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their subordination in principle. Exploitation was considerably reduced and in critical countries and moments even gave place to loans and temporary subsidies; large numbers of Soviet agents and "advisers" were withdrawn and control exercised chiefly (though never exclusively) at the top through the three parallel channels of party ties—all Soviet ambassadors to Communist governments were replaced by representatives of the party machine—of the joint high command of the Warsaw Pact, and of the Council for Mutual Economic Aid; the local party leaders were permitted, even encouraged, to broaden their support by material concessions, and to exercise their own judgment on such matters as the advisable pace of collectivization; and the excesses of competitive national investments in heavy industry were curbed in favor of a division of labor.

Yet there remained the problem of establishing a new relation with the sovereign Communist states, and particularly of liquidating Stalin's legacy of conflict with Yugoslavia. Malenkov seems to have favored the restoration of friendly relations with Yugoslavia without regard to ideology, i.e. he would have treated her as a non-Communist neutral with fairly "progressive" policies. But Khrushchev evidently believed that a return of Yugoslavia to the fold would give a great new impetus to the worldwide revival of the Communist faith on which he counted, and that this could be obtained by appealing to the Marxist-Leninist convictions of the Yugoslav Communists to make them rejoin the world Communist movement as equals. This "solution" was strictly verbal: the "sovereignty" of the states was to be a fiction, the ideological unity of the parties and their recognition of the primacy of the Soviet Union the reality—the satellite parties were to remain under strict discipline. For Poland, Gomulka accepted Soviet bloc solidarity, and that meant *de facto* subordination to Soviet foreign policy; but he did not accept the right of the Soviet leaders—or of any international organization dominated by them—to interfere with the internal running of his party, or with any specific issues of its domestic policy, however important. He took his stand not on the right to stay neutral (like Nagy) or on any "revisionist" doctrine, like the Yugoslavs, but strictly on the principle of party autonomy as against subordination. The Russians who had used military force rather than allow the people of Hungary to overthrow Communist party rule, were clearly not prepared to go to the same length to break Gomulka's autonomy; but they were nevertheless faced with the question whether they could tolerate an example of insubordination that might easily spread.

For about a year after the critical October 1956, while the echoes of the battle of Budapest died away and the process of consolidation went on, Khrushchev put up with the autonomy of his Polish ally. But when he had won the last battle of the succession struggle—the removal of Zhukov—he confronted the Moscow conference of Communist parties last November with a renewed demand for ideological discipline under Soviet leadership. The declaration then adopted by the twelve "ruling" parties lays down once again a number of fairly detailed common principles for the "building of socialism," as well as the role of the Soviet Union as the single center of the world Communist movement, and the need for all parties to fight "revisionist" ideologies as the "main danger" in the present period. There is evidence that the Polish delegation accepted this text only under severe pressure, and after some amendments had been incorporated—amendments intended to safeguard the right of each party to decide on the application of common principles. It was obvious at the time that the real purpose of the declaration was to restore the subordination of all Communists, even in matters of domestic policy and party ideology, and to end the toleration of "polycentrism." Since then, the fight to break the autonomy of the Polish Communists has been continued, though mostly behind the scenes. It has become especially acute since the Prague meeting of Communist parties held in early March,

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when publication of a new international journal was decided "in principle" (the Polish Communists posed as a condition of their cooperation that the journal should not interfere in the internal affairs of any Communist party). And it forms the background to the violence of the Soviet and Chinese onslaught on the new program of the Yugoslav Communists.

That the Yugoslavs refuse to join the Soviet bloc and give ideological reasons for this decision, may be a personal disappointment to Khrushchev, but can no longer come as a surprise, and is not in itself of enough importance to justify all this trouble. But that Belgrade explicitly formulates the principle of party autonomy on which the Poles have implicity taken their stand (and which presumably some other satellite leaders would like to follow) explains the fury of the charge that their program is "calculated to undermine the unity of the world Communist movement." In fact, the Yugoslav issue is being used to warn the Poles that they must choose between Yugoslavia's "nationalist deviation" and Soviet orthodoxy—a choice that ten years ago led to Gomulka's fall from the party leadership and to his subsequent imprisonment. The efforts of the Polish Communists to take a "middle line," to condemn the Yugoslav views while defending their right to hold them, show how difficult their situation has become in the face of this pressure.

There remains the question why Khrushchev should try so hard to break the autonomy of his Soviet bloc allies as to endanger the degree of consolidation he had achieved. The answer must be that, being a totalitarian ruler, he is ultimately as convinced as Stalin was that no ally can be considered reliable unless he is under Moscow's discipline. He is probably genuine in his desire to treat the satellite peoples better and lead their Communist chiefs on a looser rein than Stalin did; he might even be willing to permit a disciplined Gomulka to continue much of his successful non-collectivist agricultural policy (for a time, though hardly all of it or forever). But he insists that it must depend on Moscow to decide what is orthodoxy and who is to be expelled from the Polish Communist party as a "revisionist." Without this disciplinary power, how could he, with his totalitarian mentality, be sure that Polish support of his foreign policies will be unconditional and wholehearted—how could he risk having the leader of an autonomous party as his partner at summit talks? Khrushchev's methods of pressure are more subtle than those used by Stalin against Tito, but he will not renounce his objective of restoring international discipline under Soviet leadership. A Communist one-party state need not always run its empire by the methods of ruthless exploitation and supervision devised by Stalin—but it still cannot turn the party empire into a commonwealth of truly independent allies.

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THE CAVE AT MACHPELAH

A Play

PAUL GOODMAN

Genesis 25:9—*for the Israelis*

(The entrance of the cave; and Rebekah kneeling there beside the covered corpse of Abraham. The servant Eleazar entreating with Rebekah. Isaac seated front, perhaps crosslegged. He is in his middle-aged prime, but today quiet and broken.)

ELEAZAR: Madam, you must prevail on him
to come away. We are not safe here.
We have come up into these woods
with our pitiful few and a corpse.
No animal courage in *my* heart
—Father is dead. Put him in the cave
alongside Sarah and let's go.

ISAAC: No! no! I shall not go away
till I am comforted.

ELEAZAR: How long? how long
shall we remain, until the body stinks?
When Abraham was living there was peace;
why? because Abraham was prudent;
he did not tempt the danger, he
forestalled it before ever it arose.
(A boy crosses over.)
Now it arises! Boy! keep a good watch.
(Exit boy.)

ISAAC: No! no! I shall not go away
till I am comforted.

ELEAZAR: Good God in heaven!
look down on us and be Thou Merciful!
My master who was provident for me
died yesterday, today the very first
choice that is laid on us to choose,
life or death, is chosen like a fool.

ISAAC *(rises)*: Lazar! look at me. Am I a fool?

ELEAZAR: I did not say a fool but like a fool.

ISAAC: Nevertheless! you are right.
You are right, therefore *you* return
to our tents at Hagar's pool
and there report: that Isaac from Machpelah
will come away when he is comforted.
Answer me not. Go as I command.

ELEAZAR: This is your first command I disobey,
an impossible order and a disobedient
servant. I came here to accompany
the body of your father Abraham
into the cave. I *shall* accompany it.
(But he begins to tremble and falls to his knees.)
Master, but I am frightened.
If I am on my knees, it's not to plead
—your father taught, a reason does not plead
but speaks—but my knees do not support me.
Son! and will you let the body rot
as is forbidden, while you wait
for consolation like a four-year-old?
And what if there is no consolation?
You will not go till you are comforted;
and what if a *man* cannot be comforted?

ISAAC: When mother died, I was comforted.
I took a wife and I was comforted.
You yourself, Eleazar, brought her to me,
Rebekah, you encountered at the well,
and I did love her and was comforted.

ELEAZAR: Here you will find no comfort at Machpelah
but death.
(The boy appears running across.)
It is already too late!
my soul is clouding over and I am going
to die.
(And he falls forward as if in a faint. The boy runs up to them.)

POET, novelist, playwright, and critic, PAUL GOODMAN is the author of numerous books, including *The Facts of Life, The State of Nature, Art and Social Nature,* and *Kafka's Prayer. The Cave at Machpelah* is the final scene of a long play, *The Family of Abraham,* which the Living Theater will present in New York this coming fall. Mr. Goodman's last previous appearance in COMMENTARY was with the article "Jews in Modern Architecture" (July 1957), written in collaboration with his brother, Percival Goodman.

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ISAAC: A moment, boy. . . . Stand up! stand up! stand up!
(They support Eleazar to his feet.)

ISAAC (*angry*): O faithful but unprofitable servant!
why do you shake, or try to shake, my faith?
because I *know,* for God has told me so,
that I must not on my authority
carry that body down into the cave.
Another has the right to say, *Do* so!
equal with my right. I wait for him.
What do you fear?

ELEAZAR: I? I fear nothing.
I used to fear, but now I know.
The cloud has passed and I see very clear.
We are in ambush. Is it not so, boy?

BOY: You have said it. The wood is surrounded.

ISAAC: Excellent boy! we have not long to wait.

ELEAZAR (*reckless*): Ha! and which of all the godless tribes
is chosen to destroy the house of Isaac?
is it the Hittite, friend to Abraham,
or the Amorite of Mamre over there,
or Treacherous the offspring of Amalek?

BOY: None of these. It is the seed of Ishmael.
(At this Isaac snaps his fingers.)
I know them by their speech which is like ours.

ELEAZAR: What? have *they* tracked us hither all the way
from Paran? Wolves! like a pack of wolves!
how fast the bad news travels in our country!
Tell me, boy, for you are sharp, how many do they outnumber us?

BOY: Let us say, ten to one.

ELEAZAR: (*brandishing his knife*):
Ten to one! Can I slay ten to one
before I fall and croak? Can I not!
Isaac will slay twenty and *not* die
because the Lord has promised him a son
to wrestle an angel at the River Jabbok
and that son is not yet! Boy, draw your knife!
how many can *you* kill on this holiday
we came to bury Father Abraham
in the Cavern of Machpelah in the woods?
(He laughs, a little madly. And there is silence.)

ISAAC (*quietly*): Son, has Ishmael come?

BOY: His sons have come.
I don't know: all that I can see is eyes
watching us, gleaming, in the foliage,
whichever way—I looked into their eyes
and carefully I counted fifty pair:
they are in a circle all around
and we are in the center of the circle;
and time to time they drop a spoken word.

ISAAC: Yes, Ishmael has come. Thee God be praised!
that he has come in time before our father
rotted away and stank, as is forbidden.
Because his right is equal to my own,
although I have the blessing.
Rise Rebekah!
(It is Rebekah the young wife, not yet a mother.)
Here is my brother Ishmael whom our father
treated ill, come to the funeral.
My brother was the elder, and my father
chose out of all our wealth of flocks and treasure
and the promissory blessings of the Lord,
to give him a little bread and a bottle of water
and cast them out, the mother and the boy,
into the wilderness. Her name was Hagar.
I was a child, I do not remember it.
Rebekah! do you remember, on a day
how I was walking lonely in the field
deep in my thoughts, it was the evening,
and suddenly I lifted up my eyes
and saw, silhouetted against the west,
you on the camel?

REBEKAH: I lighted from the camel.
My face was veiled. I knew that it was you.
(He holds her.)

ISAAC: Why are you weeping? Is that memory sad?

REBEKAH: Husband, I was thinking about Hagar.
(At this moment there is a deafening and blood-curdling shriek from all the twelve sons of Ishmael. Eleazar and the two boys array themselves in front of the corpse with their knives drawn.)

ISAAC: (*in a loud voice*):
Blest art Thou, O Lord, who bringest
us face to face and to say I and thou!
(Protecting Rebekah, he draws his knife. Howling, the Ishmaelites leap onstage and

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in a quick melee Eleazar engages one of the sons and stabs him, and is himself at once stabbed, and both fall dead. Enter Ishmael, towering in rage. He is a powerful sheikh, graying; noisy but not a fool; moody.)

ISHMAEL: *Stay!*
(Silence and all motion arrested.)
Wild asses! what! and is your hand
raised against *every* man? and therefore, *therefore*
every hand is raised against ye. O
ye dwellers in the *face* of all your brethren!
I and Thou! don't you know *any* way
to meet and to say I and Thou except
with a weapon and a blow? But long ago
my mother the Egyptian warned me of it.
Let it end! let it end!
(The sons shout in great anger)

NEBAIOTH: Now damn it God!
you yourself said these were enemies.

KEDEMAH: You *said* this was your disinheritor.

KEDAR: Shall I stay my hand and Jetur lies there dead?
he fell on him—and shall I stay my hand?

MISHMA: Henceforth go expeditions by yourself.

ISHMAEL: Silence, you pack! did I not order Silence!
Is it for this that I have grown gray hairs
to hear my boys cast back into my teeth
what I have said and what I didn't say?
My gift of speech was given me to pour,
to flow and roar, and murmer like a fountain,
and not to measure it out like a tradesman.

MISHMA: Yes, but our brother's dead.
(Ishmael goes to look, and touches him with his foot.)

ISHMAEL: Yes, he is dead.
This one is dead too. It is one and one.
One on the one side and one is dead on the other.
The score is even. Let it end right there.
I thought he had stolen by prerogative.
I was in error. There the body is.
(An uneasy pause. Isaac goes to confirm that Eleazar is dead. He comes sadly to Ishmael.)

ISAAC: Ishmael, my name is Isaac. I am your brother.

ISHMAEL: *(peering into his face)*:
Is it Isaac? But the man is Isaac!
He has not changed! Only he must laugh.
Isaac, laugh! be how I remembered you!
My sons, look here! here is your Uncle Isaac
just as I described him from a child
more beautiful than any angels are.
But he must laugh!

ISAAC: Brother, not today.
I will laugh for you some other day.

ISHMAEL: Aha! you are referring to the fact
the body isn't buried? I am not
delicate. That was a mighty chief,
I am his eldest son. We heard the news—
bad news, it travels fast—then hurry! hurry!
I came to license you to bury him
—because your right is stronger than my own—
before the body rotted away and stank.
From Paran to Machpelah in twelve hours!
on Arabian horses! take my advice:
they are the best.
(Very earnestly, he takes Isaac by the shoulders and peers into his eyes.)
You would not deny me the authority?
to lay my father's body in the grave?
Was I the first-born? wasn't I the first-born?

ISAAC: You have the right. You were the firstborn.
I have been waiting for you, Ishmael.
I did not think of it, I do not know you,
but the Lord put the thought into my mind.
There is the body of our father. Bury it.
(Ishmael goes toward it, but he is chary of it. He is disturbed, sober, quiet. Finally he stands on the other side, over the two dead.)

ISHMAEL: Tell me, Isaac, how did *this* come about?

ISAAC: My servant was afraid, so he is dead.

ISHMAEL: How did your servant come to be afraid?

ISAAC: His stay, our father Abraham, was dead.

ISHMAEL: *This* one is dead because we are ignorant.
Which of my sons is it? We hardly know one another.
Certainly we do not know ourselves.
Jetur. I hardly knew him.
(He broods.)

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REBEKAH: You are strange.

ISHMAEL: (*first noticing her*):
What is this? a woman! who is this?

ISAAC: My wife, Rebekah. Ishmael, my brother.

ISHMAEL (*marveling*):
In the name of the Stars, Rigel and Fomelhaut!
With us, our women do not walk abroad
but heavily veiled, no doubt as it should be.
Yet if by chance I see to my delight
such a being! as this lady here!
Brother, I am a desert-man, yet once
I went a caravan to where the sea
beat on the shore in Joppa and the sun
was spangling on the water, then I threw
myself to plunge my face in so much water,
to plunge my hands in so much golden water.
So, lady! let me look—but you are looking
back at me; why do you call me strange?

REBEKAH: You speak of him as if he were not your son.

ISHMAEL: Madam, it is because I have so many sons.
(*At this Rebekah bursts into tears and she kneels beside the body of Eleazar.*)
REBEKAH (*faintly and intimately*):
Lezar! since that lucky lucky day
down to the well I went and willingly
let my pitcher down for you to drink
and then I poured the water in the trough
also for your animals—nothing but happiness
has haunted me, the way the moon goes with you
whichever way you walk, sometimes too much
for me to bear, I have been smothered by it.
You gave me then a golden ear-ring and
two golden bracelets; here are the bracelets, Lezar,
and here is the ear-ring: let me take it off;
and nothing but happiness has haunted me.
(*She weeps. But Isaac comes to her and looks down at the body and smiles sadly but broadly at what he has thought of, and he speaks in a loud whisper.*)

ISAAC: Lezar! Lezar! listen to *me* now:
"Blest art Thou, O Lord, who has jumped for me—my jump!"
(*A pause.*)

ISHMAEL (*profoundly disturbed*):
My sons! I am astounded! they are weeping just for someone has died. But there will be thousands of others!

NEBAIOTH: Father, may we now break the silence and mourn for our brother?
(*Ishmael turns away, and goes to the rear to the body of Abraham.*)

THE ELEVEN SONS OF ISHMAEL (in chorus):
Jetur! Jetur!
That was the name of our brother.

ONE SON: We hardly knew one another.

ALL: We hardly knew one another.

ONE: And now Jetur is dead!

ONE: What are the names of the brood of Ishmael?

ALL: Nebaioth, Kedar, and Adbeel
Mibsam, Tema, and Mishma,
Jetur, Hadad, and Duma,
Massa, Naphish, and Kedema.
These are the names of our brood.

ONE (*loudly*): Jetur! thy name we still include.

ALL: Altho Jetur is dead.
(*softly*): Jetur! Jetur!

ONE: Now that we have lost our brother, let us encounter one another.

ALL: (*softly*): Now that we have lost our brother
(*loudly*): let us encounter one another.
(*A pause.*)

ISHMAEL: So! I have looked my fill upon this man.
I never bore him anything but love.
I did not know him well enough for tears.
Oh how my soul is restless! what can quiet my little soul? My brother is himself;
hunting and building do not bring me peace;
neither women; nor looking on the dead.
Oh how my soul is restless! what can quiet my little soul?

Wandering across the windy deserts
of this world quiets not my little soul;
neither weapons, nor to look on dead men
still hot. But speech with the All-merciful
Allah of the Night-time: this can quiet my little soul.
Isaac, I've looked enough upon our father.
I never bore him anything but love.

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I did not know him well enough for tears.
Give the order: put him in the grave.

ISAAC: Done. You young men, carry these bodies in.
(Cortege. And they carry in first Eleazar and Jetur. Then Abraham.)

ISAAC *(lightly)*:
My brother! and is it so lightly and
without ceremony that we bury
that great man? He left nothing incomplete.
(Ishmael lays his arms proudly across the shoulders of two of his.)

ISHMAEL: How do we bury him? His body lives!

ISAAC *(tapping his forehead)*:
Believe me, Ishmael, his wisdom lives.
Our father, he was not a careless teacher,
Isaac was not an inattentive pupil.

ISHMAEL: Isn't it pitiful! how it is always
at father's funeral the brothers meet.

ISAAC: Let us be frank: alive he kept us separate;
now he is dead we follow him together.
(They follow. At the entrance Isaac stops.)

ISAAC: Ishmael! let me say. This cave is mine.
My father bought it from the tribe of Heth
—the story is well known. I have the title—
four hundred shekels, current with the merchant:
"Sell me a sepulchre where I may put
my dead out of my sight, because the Princess Sarah
is dead—make this possession *sure* to me—
in front of all the people, with a contract,
and silver paid—because the Princess Sarah
is dead." And the Hittite said, "Take it."
My mother is laid there, and now my father,
and I shall lie there and my wife Rebekah,
yes, and my son, the one who is not yet born,
shall lie there, and his wife who is not born.
Out of sight! out of sight! out of sight!
Therefore I say to you: this cave is mine.

ISHMAEL *(flashing him a look of surprise)*:
Brother! it is a cave, and it is yours.
It is a cave and many will be buried there,
as many will be buried everywhere.
Let us go in.
(They go in, leaving only Rebekah. After a moment, she busies herself unpacking and laying a cloth for two. She begins to sing light-heartedly.)

REBEKAH *(singing)*:
What's *new*? The news is Day!
The news o' the day is Day!
(She stops, puzzled.)
What's new? the news is Day!
the news o' the day is Day.
But there must be *something* more to that song. But I can't remember it.
(She goes on humming. Enter the Angel of the Fountain.)

ANGEL: Rebekah!
(She looks up, but sees nothing. She goes on working and humming.)
Rebekah!
(She stops, listening, listening inwardly.)

REBEKAH: Really, I must be losing my mind. And so young.

ANGEL: Nay, Rebekah!

REBEKAH: Here I am!
I know you! you are the Angel of the Fountain
who came to Hagar in the wilderness.
But what do you want of *me*? *I* need nothing.

ANGEL: Why, I have come for nothing. Just like this.
To pass the time of day the while the men are in the cave. You are preparing lunch?

REBEKAH *(drily)*: Obviously. Make yourself at home.
No, do something. There is a bottle of wine there on the ass's saddle in the trees.
Will you get it for me, please.

ANGEL: Ah, you put me to work!

REBEKAH: Don't you ever work?

ANGEL: It's not usual.
(He reaches out his hand and magically has the bottle of wine, which he gives her.)
Here is the wine. Is there anything else?

REBEKAH *(disturbed)*: Thank you. No. I can cope from here on out.
Let me see. Bread and salt. And water. And wine.
And then the meal. And candy for the mourners.
(She turns sharply and faces the Angel.)
What are you staring at? I am afraid.
I am frightened of you. Naturally.

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ANGEL: Princess Rebekah, I *did* come for a purpose.

REBEKAH (*brave*): What *is* your purpose, Angel? I am ready.

ANGEL (*softly*): I came to say the Grace before this meal.

REBEKAH (*largamente, swept by adoration*): My—lord!
(*She must say this broadly all of a sudden, a totally given affirmation: to be, somehow, the climax of all these plays about Abraham.*)
(*And she prostrates herself and lays her forehead on the ground, the while the Angel says the following Grace.*)

ANGEL: Happy is he who has been able to understand the causes of things. In the Name of the Creator spirit and of the nature of things, be happy they who serve and eat this meal. Fed enough, sustained, satisfied and fortified, may they be put to use according to their powers, and find often the activity that meets their coming forth. In the turning of the world.
Blest art Thou, O Lord—

REBEKAH (*ritual response*):
Blest is He—blest is His Name—

ANGEL: Who feedest all. And let us say,

REBEKAH; ANGEL: Amen.
(*The Sons and the Boys have reappeared. And after the Amen, Isaac and Ishmael, to whom Rebekah at once speaks with impressment.*)

REBEKAH: My lords, sit down and eat. You are tired
and hungry, therefore sit down and eat.
See, I have set it up, it is a lunch.
The rest of us will afterwards.

ISHMAEL: Not so, Madam; you must excuse us. And there is no need. We are used to forage for ourselves.

REBEKAH: Please! I command you. Neither you nor he
have eaten anything since yesterday
and you have traveled far, by different ways.
Anyway, you must, for I command you.

ISHMAEL (*with a deep salaam*):
If you command us, we cannot refuse.
(*Isaac and Ishmael sit at the cloth.*)

REBEKAH: Here is bread and salt.
(*They eat it.*)

BOY: Wine, my lords?

ISHMAEL: Wine, my boy? With us, we taste no wine.
But if it is the custom with my brother
to taste of wine—yes, give me some wine.
(*And they drink and are served and begin to eat. But Rebekah is watching them with fascination. She is slowly circling and cannot take her eyes off them. Till, half-front, she speaks in a voice of wonder.*)

REBEKAH (*in Hebrew*): *Hinei! Mah tov u-mah naim shevet achim gam yachad!*
(*She says, to one of the Ishmaelites*):
Look here! how goodly and how pleasant when the brothers sit together again.
(*And he is surprised and he speaks mezzo voce to his brother.*)

SON OF ISHMAEL: *Look* here! how goodly and how pleasant when the brothers sit together again.
(*And this one in stupefaction grasps the Boy by the arm, and speaks.*)

SECOND SON OF ISH: Look *here!* how goodly and how pleasant when the brothers sit together again.

SEMI-CHORUS (*piano*): *Look!* here! how *goodly*—and how *pleasant*—when the brothers sit together again.

ALL IN CHORUS: Look here! how goodly and how pleasant when the brothers sit together again.

ISAAC: Now could I go, for I am comforted.
(*Curtain*)

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FROM THE JOURNAL OF EMMANUEL RINGELBLUM

"Notes from the Warsaw Ghetto"

TWO MILLIONS of people, the Warsaw Ghetto will remain forever a symbol of man's inhumanity to man—and of the heroic resistance of the human spirit. Within its walls, in an area of about 1,000 acres, or 100 square city blocks, some half-million Jews were methodically ground to death in the course of less than three years. Yet at the end of that time, when more than 90 per cent of the Ghetto's residents had been sent to their fate in extermination camps, armed resistance broke out—resistance so fierce that a regular German army group was required to put it down. The German army leveled the Ghetto to the ground; nothing remained but rubble—and the memory of those dread days.

It is that memory which has been preserved in the *Notes from the Warsaw Ghetto*. These *Notes* are the work of Emmanuel Ringelblum, the archivist of the Warsaw Ghetto. Ringelblum had begun his studies as an economist, later turned to sociology, and finally concentrated on history, while still retaining the tools of economics and sociology. He was a social historian rather than a political scientist, seeing history as primarily the interplay of social, economic, and institutional forces. He had helped set up a historical section of the Yiddish Scientific Institute (YIVO) whose headquarters were in Vilna.

But if Ringelblum had been only a social historian, if he had not been deeply immersed in the experience of his generation, we would not have had the *Notes*. For these, as their author repeats time and again, are not the observations of a single man. They are one man's cullings from the experiences and information supplied by a large group—several dozens—of people from various backgrounds. For Ringelblum was by conviction an active practitioner of popular education, a communal worker, a political party member, a dedicated man of the people.

The last week of August 1939, Ringelblum was in Geneva as a delegate to the twenty-first World Zionist Congress. Panic broke out among the Polish delegates when the news came of Germany's mobilization. Some of the Polish delegates decided to go to Palestine, others to fly to Paris or London and from there try to emigrate to the United States. But Ringelblum, with the other delegates of his party, decided to return to Warsaw. It was a difficult and perilous journey. They traveled to Warsaw in a blacked-out train, bombed by German planes en route. The morning after Ringelblum arrived in Warsaw, he was at his desk in the Joint Distribution Committee office.

The sixth day of the war, when Warsaw was seriously threatened by encircling German forces and a mass evacuation of the city had begun, Ringelblum made his second crucial decision. He would stay and not run. There were two reasons for this decision: his relief work for the JDC and his position as one of a triumvirate representing the Labor Zionist party.

Sometime at the beginning of 1943, more than three years after his first entry in the *Notes from the Warsaw Ghetto,* Emmanuel Ringelblum wrote a summary account of the underground archives with which the *Notes,* as well as his name, are indissolubly linked. He called his report simply "The O. S." These initials, as he goes on to explain in

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EMMANUEL RINGELBLUM, archivist of the Warsaw Ghetto and prototype of John Hersey's Noach Levinson in *The Wall,* buried the extensive notes he had been keeping just before the Ghetto Uprising of April-May 1943. Dug up from the rubble in 1946 and 1950, these notes have now been edited and translated (from the Yiddish) by JACOB SLOAN and will be published as *Notes from the Warsaw Ghetto* by McGraw-Hill this month. Our selection is taken from the section "Moving into the Ghetto"; the introductory note is a condensation of Mr. Sloan's Introduction to the book itself. Jacob Sloan's writings, both poetry and prose, are well known to COMMENTARY readers. He is the translator of Isaac Bashevis Singer's *Satan in Goray* and S. Y. Agnon's *Days of Awe,* and the author of a book of poems, *Generation of Journey.*

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his usual careful fashion, stand for "Oneg Sabbath" (Sabbath celebrants), the secret name of that "society of brothers" that he had gotten together to preserve the record of his time and people for posterity.

"I laid the cornerstone for the O.S.," says Ringelblum, "in October, 1939." At that time, the Jews of Warsaw lived in terror of raids and execution by firing squad. Fearful of being picked up on charges of sedition, they went so far as to burn any books that might be considered dangerous—and would commit nothing to writing that might be regarded as suspect if found during a raid. But Ringelblum began collecting material about the current situation practically at once.

In January 1943, the first abortive uprising in the Warsaw Ghetto had taken place. Though there is no mention of this in the *Notes* (the whole underground movement had to be clandestine), Ringelblum himself was a leader of the resistance. He was smuggled out of the Ghetto just before the uprising in April 1943. But on March 7, 1944, Emmanuel Ringelblum was executed among the ruins of Warsaw, together with his wife and twelve-year-old son, Uri.

The archives, meanwhile, along with Ringelblum's notes, had been cached deep under the ruins of the Warsaw Ghetto just before the Warsaw Uprising began in the spring of 1943. They were buried in two sections. The first section was located in September 1946; the second, at the beginning of December 1950. Ringelblum's notes were found sealed in a rubberized milk can.

Emmanuel Ringelblum was a highly moral man with a strong sense that his time was running out and he had a destiny to fulfill. That destiny was not his own; these notes were not his private creation. He was acting as the mouthpiece of his time and place and people. These notes were to serve mankind—as a warning of how men consume one another, and yet can love one another.

Moving into the Ghetto

The building of the Warsaw Ghetto took the better part of 1940. At first the "Jewish quarter" was marked off by barbed wire and fences. But by September, a wall eight feet high began to go up. (It was not completed until the summer of 1941). Eventually it formed an oblong, of about a mile and a half, enclosing, besides the medieval ghetto, the long straight streets of the industrial quarter running north of the railroad station. The northwest corner of the wall nearly touched the Vistula River, and it was bisected by the main line to Posen and Berlin. On November 15, the Warsaw Ghetto was sealed off. Guards were stationed at both sides of the wall—Jewish policemen on the inside, Polish and German militia on the outside. Only those who could prove absolute necessity received special permits. (Ringelblum notes the difficulties that doctors encountered in receiving permission to leave the Ghetto to work in the Jewish hospital on the other side of Warsaw). Wherever the Germans conquered, the Jewish badge, forced labor, Jewish quarters and ghettos, and, finally, deportation and death were the pattern. As the Jews of Warsaw moved into the Ghetto, the situation seemed hopeless. They knew, as Ringelblum says time and again, that "only a miracle can save us—the war's speedy end." A few optimists prophesied such an ending. The rest dug in for a long stay.—Jacob Sloan

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My Dear:* *October 8, 1940*

This Rosh Hashana eve (2nd of October) was a very sad one. Furniture was removed from the houses at 4, 6, and 8 Leszno Street. Besides, there was an order to clear out the apartments at Brami Zelazna Place 8, in the Wall. Tomorrow, Rosh Hashana, some of the prayer quorums will begin services at six in the morning. Placards with the traditional appeal to worshipers to come to the synagogue "to hearken unto the joy" have been put up in a number of courtyards in the Jewish neighborhood. In a word, business as usual among the pious.—Heard many favorable comments about the behavior of the Cracow Jews to those deported from Lodz (came from the camp at Radogoszcze). Arrived at Cracow at 9:30 P.M.; within half an hour they were all settled in lodgings. They rode before that for three days in the train with nothing to eat or drink.

*A false salutation to make the notes appear ordinary letters, in case of their falling into hostile hands.

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Today began the removal of Poles from certain streets in the south of Warsaw: Poznanska, Vospulna. As for the Jews, for a few coins, they're allowed to stay a while longer and to take everything out.—The Jewish populace is terribly uneasy; no one knows whether he'll be sleeping in his own bed tomorrow. People in the south of town sit at home all day waiting for the hour when They will come and drive the Jews out. This is the system for removing furniture and household things: In the morning, the courtyard gates of the house involved are closed, and no one is allowed to leave.

* * *

Scenes in the streetcar: A Jew wearing a visor and with a red kerchief at his throat cries at a Jewish woman who is speaking Polish to him: "In the Jewish streetcar one must speak Yiddish!" Someone else shouts: "And Hebrew, Hebrew too!"—An old Jew gets off the streetcar and says to the passengers, "Good day, Jews." In a word: People feel perfectly at home. The only trouble is it is just a mite too crowded.—The conductors are also doing business at the Jews' expense: they don't hand out tickets when you get on, but collect the money. Getting off, one has to pay again. The price lists in the Jewish restaurants have to be in Yiddish. A foreign citizen not wearing an armband wanted to get into a Jewish streetcar, but the conductor wouldn't let him.

The hoggishness of the rich Warsaw Jews. A year ago, when a Ghetto was imminent, and it was agreed that a contribution of 300,000 zlotys was necessary as a bribe to prevent the Ghetto's introduction, Uncle—the American Joint Distribution Committee—had to give over 100,000, the Warsaw millionaires 20,000 zlotys each.—Now in October it is said that the military and the health authority are against a Ghetto.— There are 350,000 Jews living in the quarantined epidemic area; the density there is nine times what it is outside.—Clearance sales are the most important source of income for thousands of Jews.

* * *

Heard today about the deportation (4th of October) of Jews from Zgierz. The Jews are allowed to live in the neighboring villages, but the peasants are not permitted to sell any Jews more than 1 kilo of potatoes. Heard about a Polish professor, deported from Cracow to Oranienburg, who has been mild as an angel all his life but now maintains that *there is no other recourse for the new generation of Germans but complete extermination.** A simple Jew from a small town who went through fearful persecutions said there must be schools for torture in Germany. Otherwise, he could not understand where people could have learned such novel forms of torture.—A few days ago (the eve of Rosh Hashana) pious Jews who recite prayers for the dead at the graveyard were impressed into work.—A Christian tries to get on a Jewish streetcar. They stop her. She shouts: "See that! Even the streetcars are for Jews only!"—An elderly Jewish lady wearing the traditional headgear addresses Jewish children: "You *might* speak Yiddish."—Yesterday the Jewish streetcar was stopped and Jews were taken off for forced work. The conductor is subject to a fine of one zloty for letting a Christian on the Jewish streetcar. There have been cases of Christians insisting on riding in the Jewish streetcar. "I'm no anti-Semite!" one of them cries out. Some of the Jews say, "Well, we've finally achieved a streetcar with a Jewish star." Others joke, ". . . and with a *mezuzah*, too!" In the Kutno Ghetto, memorial days in honor of Herzl as well as Jabotinsky were held with the consent of the authorities.

Lately, only Germans are being engaged to remove the furniture from Jewish apartments; They don't trust Jews to do it, because they used to carry the goods down and then up again.

* * *

Today, the 5th of October, more than one hundred Lodz Jews were put in prison. Some say because they left the Ghetto; others because they smuggled merchandise or got their goods out with the help of Germans, who later informed on them. Besides, They put old folks in prison, even Jews over sixty, because their children did not present themselves to register for the work camps. Also took tenants who concealed boarders.

A decree published stating that Jews may move about the Ghetto from seven in the morning to nine at night, outside the Ghetto from eight to seven, Poles until eleven.—A Jewess enters the Jewish streetcar: "I wish you all luck with your new streetcar!"

*Italicized English words and phrases signify Hebrew in the original.

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On Rosh Hashana people were taken to work on Rokowiecko Street. Many elderly Jews with gray hair.—Frank*, or Leist†, said he couldn't work fast enough to keep up with the things Jews think of (Ghetto, and so forth). When the question of a Ghetto was in the air, the Christian artisans from the quarantined epidemic areas appealed to the authorities: the resettlement would cost them their Jewish clients, with whom they've established close contacts.—Gallows humor: "Why should the Germans bomb London and the English Berlin? All that flying back and forth is a waste of gas. The Germans ought to bomb Berlin, the English London."—Any number of Christians may enter the main post office; Jews only ten at a time; hence the long line outside, mostly of women. The Jews wanted the war; the Jews are responsible for the war. That's the slogan repeated by the Others, even the best of them, in every conversation. . . . The "pure Jewish" streetcars—i.e., a single streetcar for Jews has a yellow placard; when there are two cars in a train, one of the cars is for Jews, the other for Christians (the Jewish one in the rear), and the placard is half-yellow.—Many firms, such as Wedel, have taken down the sign reading: Jews Not Wanted.

Characteristic that there's a Jews Not Wanted sign at the Jewish firm of Plutos. . . . I know a firm where the Jewish workers were forced to come in, though they had been discharged, because the Others had not yet mastered the work. The Jews were threatened with the Gestapo if they did not report. In some of the district offices Jews are greeted, "Stay away, stay away!"—and They motion them off with their hands. The "dirty" Jews are not to come too close. —"*Machen Sie dass Sie verschwinden!*" [See to it that you disappear!], a Jewess was told in a district office. She replied: "I am not air to disappear."—Heard of a big shot who made sure of his future by being pleasant to a Jew who came. Perhaps Germany might lose the war and having been kind to Jews might redound to his benefit.

A Jew of over sixty worked hard on Rosh Hashana, begged the Others for water, was told that a Jew could die but he would not get any water.—On Nalewki Street the Christians warn the Jews of a press gang approaching by shouting the air-raid warning signals: "Air raid over Warsaw, danger, still danger, danger approaches, danger over." Very interesting, the help from the Christians. Everybody who appears in the street is warned that They are seizing Jews in such and such a place. Christians pass the word along to Jews that They are beating Jews and ordering them to take off their hats when they don't salute.—The Fuehrer principle attracts some Jews. Saw the director of six handicrafts who strides about in boots and talks in the self-assured tone of an absolute ruler. He repeats the word "I" exactly as though he was one of God's anointed. —The reason why Jews can't go out until seven o'clock in the morning is an economic one. They don't want Jews going out early in the morning to the villages and buying up the produce of the peasants.—A Jew prayed poorly on Rosh Hashana. When asked why, he replied, "The praying matches the year."

* * *

The Jewish Council of Warsaw shows the least interest in its people. The best of the Councils is that of Radom, which often provides Jews in the forced-labor gangs with bread, medicine, and so forth. But in Warsaw there are sick Jews working who have not been relieved. And Zabludowski [of the Warsaw Jewish Council] says that everything is *all right.*** A Jew in Tisovec has undertaken to feed the campers there for 65 groschen a day.—Read a letter from Belzec a few weeks back: "Rather than go to a camp, jump into the Vistula." Yet the Poles are convinced that the Jews are better off than they!—Heard of a number of instances of Polish customers sending packages with means of subsistence to the Jewish merchants they used to deal with who are now in the Lodz Ghetto. The packages are in payment of the debts they owe the merchants. Heard moving stories in this connection.

Regrettably, the Jewish streetcar is dirtier than the non-Jewish one. Who is responsible? Both the streetcar management, which does little to keep them clean, and the Jewish passengers, who feel far too much at home there.—Today, on Marszalkowska Street, a Jewish streetcar was stopped. The

*Governor General of Poland.

†Administrator of Jewish Quarter (Ghetto) of Warsaw.

**In English.

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Jews were ordered to get out; the placard turned to white; the sign "For Jews Only" thrown over the bridge; and *men of valor** got a ride.—There have been cases recently of Jews from the south of Warsaw exchanging apartments with Christians from the north side. The south Warsaw Jews sit around on their valises waiting to be ordered to get out.—German Gestapo agents (they tell me they're called "candidates") receive no pay; consequently, they must find their own living for the three-year term of their candidacy. They were back of the Brami Place Zelazna 8 incident, where people were able to buy off the purported evacuation with 100-200 zlotys per apartment.

* * *

The populace is waiting for America to enter the war, but at the same time they're afraid of what's going to happen to the Jews. Even the most optimistic are beginning to entertain doubts about living through the war themselves—though they believe in Germany's ultimate downfall. Actually, it's hard to see what they pin their hopes on and how they imagine things will end. . . . The declaration in *Der Stuermer* that the moment America enters the war They'll put an end to the "Jewish question" in Europe has made a terrifying impression here.

* * *

The news that the Jews could stay outside the walls of the Ghetto only for a certain time turned out to be incorrect. Apparently, the limitation was only for the duration of Frank's stay in Warsaw.—Saw this scene today: Students from Konarski's high school are beating Jews on the street. A few Christians stand up to them, and a crowd gathers. These are very frequent occurrences, where Christians take the side of Jews against attacks by hoodlums. That wasn't so before the war.—The Christians from the Old City of Warsaw, with Count Tarnowski at the head, began a movement to exclude the Old City from the Ghetto.—How was the law setting up a Ghetto in Warsaw voided last year? Count Ronikier appealed to the authority in Cracow, a man called Kundt, from what was formerly Czechoslovakia. There were four armchairs in the room. Kundt was highly annoyed at the Count for daring to intervene on behalf of the Jews. At a crucial moment, a yawn was heard. It came from a huge dog. The dog yawned again, the tension that filled the great hall was broken, and the Ghetto decree was called off.—Today a decree was published permitting Jews outside the Ghetto from eight in the morning to seven at night; also, Jews have to yield the right of way to soldiers, by getting off the sidewalk when they meet.

Jewish bakers are forbidden to bake white bread. This is a hard blow for the whole trade.—Jewish artisans who are not using their machines have to share them.—The Warsaw *News* published an item about a conference of doctors who declared there was a pressing need to isolate the Jews from the rest of the populace in a Ghetto for health reasons.

* * *

October 12-13

There are guesses that some of the political groups are managed by the Gestapo. It's said that some of the political publications are put out by them. They even receive food allowances; the goal of the Gestapo is to find out what's happening among the Poles. They're under That influence. Naturally, there's no proof.

Today, Saturday the 12th of October, was dreadful. The loud-speaker announced the division of the city into three parts: a German quarter, encompassing midtown and Nowy Swiat Street; a Polish quarter; and a Jewish quarter. By the end of October, everyone but the Germans has to move over into the quarter assigned them, without taking their furniture. Black melancholy reigned in our courtyard. The mistress of the house had been living there some thirty-seven years, and now has to leave her furniture behind. Thousands of Christian businesses are going to be ruined.—Heard about a police chief who jumped out of a streetcar at the sight of students from Konarski's school attacking Jews, ran after them, and fired in the air. Don't know how it ended.

Today, Sunday the 13th of October, left a peculiar impression. It's become clear that 104,000 Jews from the south of Warsaw and the Praga suburb will have to leave their homes and move into the Ghetto. All the suburbs have been emptied of Jews, and 104,000 Christians will have to leave the Ghetto quarter. The question of what's to happen to the Christian businesses has not

*Soldiers.

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yet been clarified. All day people were moving furniture. The Jewish Council was besieged by hundreds of people wanting to know what streets were included in the Ghetto.—A group of assimilated teachers are said to have gone to the Polish [school] inspectors for support against the Jews who wished to introduce the teaching of Yiddish in the folk schools.

Today was a terrifying day; the sight of Jews moving their old rags and bedding made a horrible impression. Though forbidden to remove their furniture, some Jews did it. There were cases of vehicles containing furniture being stopped and taken away.—This is what happened in Wartegoj last year. A congregation of Jews were ordered to bury the president of the Jewish Council, or maybe it was the rabbi of the town. They had reached his throat before the Others explained that it was only a joke. The Jew shook the dirt off and said: "The earth take *them!*"—Heard that the Others have threatened that if typhus should spread the Ghetto will be closed.—The Jewish Council announced the recruitment of 1,000 Jewish policemen, honorary at first.—The complete impotence of the Council. Two weeks back, the city fathers congratulated Adam Cherniakow on his victory: He had staved off a Ghetto. As late as Friday, i.e., a day before the decree, the Council announced that no Ghetto was in prospect.—Some Christian landlords in Praga will not permit anything to be removed from the apartments until rent is paid for October. Others will allow nothing to be removed.—"Happy Corner." That's what the Jews call the newspaper that tells about "marmalade"—the German casualty lists.—SS men were removing furniture from a house on Ciepla Street. Across the way, a Jewish troupe was singing and playing music. The SS men ordered the troupe to play a waltz and dance in the middle of the street. The well-dressed Jews who came along were ordered to give 5 zlotys for the entertainment; poorly dressed Jews, 10 groschens and more.—They seized several women, took them into a cellar. There forced them to pluck feathers. After the women had finished, They stripped them naked and gave each of them thirty blows.

* * *

October 20

. . . How the Jewish police have taken over the police service. They direct traffic in the street. They've put things straight on Karmelicka Street. They're already sitting around in the commissariats, though the Polish police are still in charge. On the 31st the Poles are due to leave—It's reported that a large transport of sugar was moved through Chlodna Street. Each of the guards got *five thousand*. Though Germans have to have passes to enter the Ghetto, a number of streets were robbed today again and bedding and the like taken away. Long lines standing in front of the drug stores, which are being simply sold out. The courtyards too are buying large amounts. . . . The dearth of medications in the Lodz Ghetto, where a spoonful of castor oil was worth a fortune during the dysentery attack.

The people who have come here from Lodz, experienced in Ghetto life, have concentrated on buying up large quantities of produce. They also buy big amounts of wood, rather than coal.

Today there was a vicious article in the Polish rag [*New Warsaw Courier*] about the Sabbath Gentiles who serve as the Jews' catspaws, bringing produce into the Ghetto. A series of such articles is being published—with photographs of the persons involved.

Heard that the group that was impressed to work in Polaw under Jewish supervision have found good conditions there. They earn 3 zlotys 20, of which 1 and 20 goes toward maintenance. The rest is for the family. They live in stone barracks; the place is kept warm; on arrival they received breakfast. The Jews from Henrikow and neighboring towns were sent into the countryside; the same in the area around Radomsk. People prefer to work in Okencia. On the way back from work, they buy a couple of breads and make some money selling the bread in the Ghetto. The *righteous Gentile* cursed out the Polish police chief of Grochow for putting the *chalutzim* in prison; made him personally responsible if a hair of their heads was touched. Bought a Dutch cow for them. Has great feeling for Jews who work on the land.

The Jewish Council is maneuvering so as not to have to create a food-supply office itself for the Ghetto, but to have the city magistracy continue to handle this function. The Poles are in accord with this; one of their head officials in the magistracy has promised to help in this matter.—Janusz

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Korczak arrested for not wearing an arm band.—Today the Germans declared that no potatoes would be allowed to enter the Ghetto, because the Jews have large hoards of them. We are to receive potatoes later.

* * *

Today, the 23d of October, another announcement over the loud-speaker that Walicow and Zeglana Streets have been excluded from the Ghetto. At the same time, news that the deadline for moving into the Ghetto has been postponed until after the 31st of October, i.e., until the 15th of November. People are walking around crazy with anxiety because they don't know where to move to. Not a single street is sure of being assigned to the Ghetto, but every street has something that puts it in jeopardy. When, a few days ago, it became known that Zelazna and all the neighboring streets (Lucka, Wronia, the end of Sliska, Panska, etc.) had been excluded from the Ghetto, the anguish was indescribable. There were Jews who said they'd rather be poisoned with gas than tortured so. More than 7,000 Jews from the neighborhood had moved into those particular streets, as well as Jews from Praga. The Jews from Praga had exchanged their large apartments for small ones in the Zelazna neighborhood; Christians who moved into apartments in the south of Warsaw exchanged for larger ones; Jews moving north, on the contrary, always exchanged for smaller apartments. At 9 Warecka there was a German stationed to examine what the Jews were taking out with them, each piece separately. At the same address, a Jew who worked for the Jewish Council fetched a German from the Gestapo. For pointing out forty Jewish apartments with furniture, he got an apartment free for himself, and besides his furniture was removed by car.—Some rich Jews have lost all their money. For example, diamonds bought for 100,000 zlotys are now worth 5,000. Dollars bought at 250 now worth 30.

* * *

October 21-24

At 2 Przebieg Street two soldiers demanded 50 zlotys from a friend of mine to let him alone. He didn't have it, so they took him a few kilometers outside the city and took his coat away from him.—A Jew alternately laughs and yells in his sleep. His wife wakes him up. He is mad at her. "I was dreaming someone had scribbled on a wall: 'Beat the Jews! Down with ritual slaughter!'" "So what were you so happy about?" "Don't you understand? That means the good old days have come back! The Poles are running things again!"

Two lawyers, Koral and Tykoczynski, have committed suicide because of the resettlement decree. K. was the legal counsel of the French Embassy.

The Jewish Council's registration of apartments has broken the black-market speculation in them. People are looking for relatives and friends to share their apartments, out of fear lest the Council put strangers in to board with them.—It is said that the Lodz Ghetto is about to be declared open.* The Ghetto in Kutno is open already.—Instead of the pre-war slogan of "Jews—Go Back to Palestine!" today we've a Jewish star in Poland, and Poles in Palestine.†

A world of beggars and tramps in the streetcar. All merchandise transported via streetcar. Rumors that produce will have to be paid for in gold and foreign currency in the Ghetto.

* * *

Nov. 8

A police chief came to the apartment of a Jewish family, wanted to take some things away. The woman cried that she was a widow with a child. The chief said he'd take nothing if she could guess which one of his eyes was the artificial one. She guessed the left eye. She was asked how she knew. "Because that one," she answered, "has a human look."

There was said to have been an announcement over the loud-speaker yesterday that it was forbidden to speak of the "Jewish Ghetto"; the proper term was "Jewish quarter," like the German and Polish quarters.—Today a Jewish tailor on Orla Street had goods taken away from him. There was a Jew in the crowd who ripped the collars off fur coats and hid them in his breast.—PCH ("Pay Conductor Half") is what they call the Jewish streetcars nowadays; they're half empty. A Jew was ordered to take off his fur

*An open ghetto was one whose residents might leave it at stated intervals. A closed ghetto (like that of Warsaw) could be left only by persons with special permits.

†Polish soldiers fighting with the British in the Middle East.

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coat. He answered: "I'd gladly give it to you, but I've just come out of the hospital. I had the typhus." That scared Them off.—Heard that some 200 persons have died of natural causes or been killed in the work camps.

The news that apartments are to be requisitioned has started people looking for cheap boarders, to fill up the apartments.—Those who turn informer get 10 per cent of the spoils. Four of them accompanied a police chief (who happened to be an honest man) to a Jewish business on Nalewki Street. They grabbed linen and other things, which they stuck into their trousers, and came out bulging like bears. Often, when Jews salute the Others, They gesture "It isn't necessary." Most of them pass by as though the salute had nothing to do with them. The worst thing is when two or three Jews come along in a group, and only one of them salutes. Very often courteous Germans reply to the salute.

* * *

Nov. 10

The Saturday the Ghetto was introduced (16th of November) was terrible. People in the street didn't know it was to be a closed Ghetto, so it came like a thunderbolt. Details of German, Polish, and Jewish guards stood at every street corner searching passers-by to decide whether or not they had the right to pass. Jewish women found the markets outside the Ghetto closed to them. There was an immediate shortage of bread and other produce. There's been a real orgy of high prices ever since. There are long queues in front of every food store, and everything is being bought up. Many items have suddenly disappeared from the shops.—There's no connection between Twarda and Leszno Streets. You have to go by way of Zelazna Street.—Jewish businesses in the Aryan part of the city have been shut tight, to prevent pilfering.—Neither Saturday nor Sunday did the Jewish doctors get passes. The Jewish Council levies a tax of 5 zlotys per pass.—Saturday Jewish workers were not allowed to leave the city on their outside work details. On the first day after the Ghetto was closed, many Christians brought bread for their Jewish acquaintances and friends. This was a mass phenomenon. Meanwhile, Christian friends are helping Jews bring produce into the Ghetto.

At the corner of Chlodna and Zelazna Streets, those who are slow to take their hats off to Germans are forced to do calisthenics using paving stones or tiles as weights. Elderly Jews, too, are ordered to do push-ups. They tear paper up small, scatter the pieces in the mud, and order people to pick them up, beating them as they stoop over. In the Polish quarter Jews are ordered to lie on the ground and They walk over them. On Leszno Street a soldier came through in a wagon and stopped to beat a Jewish pedestrian. Ordered him to lie down in the mud and kiss the pavement.—A wave of evil rolled over the whole city, as if in response to a nod from above. At the same time there are still official optimists who believe that there will be no Ghetto, or it will not be a closed one.—The Jewish Law and Order Service (which appeared on the 16th of November) was ordered to dance on one foot around a group of Jews performing calisthenics in the street. The Jewish Council is said to be preparing a plan for a post office, food-supply service, and Jewish currency.—Because of the closing of the Ghetto and the feverish buying up of everything, all the Jewish streets are full of people milling about. It's simply impossible to pass through. Pedestrians overflow the sidewalk, spill over on the street.—Friday night, Jews were arrested in Praga and driven by car to Muranowska and other streets in the Ghetto, and there deposited. They spent the night on the stoops and in the courtyard gateways. Took nothing with them except hand baggage.—Saturday saw groups of Jews being driven from Praga into the Ghetto. Under guard they were settled down in houses and schools, dance halls, etc. The Jewish Council is requisitioning single rooms for them from Jews who have large apartments.—A scene: At the corner of Chlodna and Zelazna Streets, a Jewish family says its farewells to a Polish one. They kiss, shake hands, invite one another to "come visit us next week."—At the end of Tlomackie Place and Bielanska Street—the borderline between the Ghetto and the Other Side—stand a long line of streetcars being searched for Jews trying to smuggle themselves out of the Ghetto. Everybody is ordered out of the streetcar and their papers examined. It looks like a border point between two countries. Sometimes a streetcar stands there for as long as ten-fifteen minutes.—Was told about a group of workers from a work camp. Shadows

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of human beings, shoeless, feet wrapped in rags.—The furniture requisitioned from Jewish apartments is taken to the Splendide movie house (the Sphinx), and can be bought back there a little at a time. *Our brethren and children of Israel* are helpful in this business.—The revolting informing on Muni.*—One of the sad developments of the resettlement has been the large number of beggars that have turned up (Jews from the suburbs).—A group of Jewish workers together with their foreman had to do calisthenics at the corner of Leszno and Zelazna Streets.—The doctors who rode the streetcar to the hospital at Cziste Street on Sunday were taken off the car and made to do calisthenics for an hour. An elderly Jew passed the guards on Twarda Street and did not—for reasons of piety—take off his hat in salute although the Jewish guards warned him. So they tortured him a long time. An hour later, he acted the same way. "They can go to hell."

Many Jews make their living outside the Ghetto, and now they're cut off from it. Firms that are administered by the city commissariat, it is said, will have to move to the Other Side—i.e., the Jews who make part of their living out of these firms will lose that part, too.—It is said that the Ghetto will be half open until the 25th of November, afterward. . . .

People are paying 2,500 zlotys moving money for the administration that handles the Jewish houses; the same amount for concessions in monopoly items. There's also talk in the courtyards about having all the neighbors in the courtyard cook collectively, because of the shortage of wood and coal. The same thing happened in Lodz, where as early as the third day [after the Ghetto was introduced] they even had a common pot to brew coffee in.

A Christian was killed today, the 19th of November, for throwing a sack of bread over the Wall.—The rabbi of Wengrow was stabbed last year. The blood flowed from his wound, but he kept working for four hours until he fainted.—Many Jews of means who until now never gave a groschen for relief have suddenly begun to give large sums to the Self-Aid Society, so that it can purchase produce for the winter for the poor people in the courtyards. The Ghetto game is continuing. It is said that the electricity has been turned off in the Lodz Ghetto. Jews have to sit in the dark there. The rumor has spread that electricity will cost four times as much for Jews as for Christians. One of those good ideas of ours that the Nazis are happy to adopt!

* * *

Today, the 20th of November, a rumor that the Ghetto will be open for five days, and afterwards (after the 25th) will be hermetically sealed. A rumor that They will supply the Ghetto with food on condition that payments be in gold and foreign currency.—The Lodz Ghetto said to have been opened.—The Gehenna at the corner of Chlodna and Zelazna Streets goes on. They order groups of pedestrians to walk past very fast, all at once. They drive them on like dogs. People are even pulled out of droshkys. A company of Jewish Law and Order Service men were forced to do their exercises at the Theater Plaza. Fifty of them had to be carried off afterward.—It is said that the authorities have already begun taking away the merchandise of Jewish businesses situated outside the Ghetto, a little at a time.

Often, Jews recommended by the Gestapo get apartments through Their requisitions.

* * *

Nov. 21

The Jewish dealers are transporting produce, fowl, and like items from the Vistula line to Warsaw. Payment is by the wagon load. The first costs 250 zlotys, says the conductor; the second, 300 zlotys. The health authority made a check. They found that half of the passengers were driving with "Linarski's tickets."† Both doors of the train car were closed, and no one allowed in. [The food smugglers] also bribed a German with 40 zlotys per load.—Some Warsaw Jews have fled to the provinces.—Christian acquaintances send flowers to people moving into the Ghetto. Never were so many flowers sold before. At the beginning of the war, or before the occupation of Warsaw by the Germans, or during the first weeks of the occupation—whenever an individual Jewish businessman may have liquidated his business—the Jewish bosses gave their Christian employees a lot

*Emmanuel Ringelblum himself.

†I.e., without tickets, but with banknotes with which they bribed the conductors. Linarski's signature was on the banknotes.

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of money as severance pay. Etingon in Lodz gave his employees a year's pay; other Jewish businessmen gave six months' pay. Still others offered their Christian employees merchandise, but they refused it. . . . Praga refugees moved themselves into the Ghetto this way: They loaded wagons with bedding, and sat down on top of it.

The guards of the Warsaw Ghetto are from Lodz. They are old hands at the job. Today, the slogan is: "Go slow, don't run like yesterday." A Jew was ordered to kneel, and They urinated on him. They beat women, too, at Chlodna Street. The Ghetto has evoked considerable unrest among the Poles, who are fearful that They will get after them next: Trustees will be appointed —to take over Polish property, as they did Jewish property—their furniture will be removed, and the like. Today the rumor circulated that the English and Soviet radios announced every half hour: "Half a million Jews are being immured in a Ghetto."

The work camp transports: Some of those who returned came back in their underwear. Yesterday, the 20th of November, more than 800 Jews were routed from their beds for the forced work camps, invalids, too, never sent to the medical commission [for certification as fit for work].—Heard of two instances where women stepped off the street to allow soldiers to pass. The latter marveled and said they knew of no such decree.—Streets fearfully full of movement again. The populace races about terror-stricken, but the young folks are strolling down Leszno Street, as usual.

One hundred fifty Jews from Berlin are supposed to have arrived at the Zofjowka madhouse. In general, there has been no connection between the Jews from Poland and those from other countries that are now part of the Reich. Besides, Jewish prisoners of war from Poland rarely came into contact with the Jews of the cities where they were stationed.

* * *

Nov. 29

No Christians were allowed into the Ghetto with produce today, the reason being . . . from the Poles that everything is being transported from there—the Other Side—here.—There is talk of building two suspension bridges (viaducts), one connecting Solna and Ciepla Streets, the other Bonifraterska and Przebieg Streets.

Of the 800 Jews in the S.S. employ, They have released only some 50, despite the Poles' energetic appeals that They employ only Christians—and They have not taken any Christians to fill the Jews' place.—A man who visited the Other Side tells of the great difference. There movement is free. People can walk about as they wish, well dressed. The cafés are full of people, the streets empty. Not overcrowded, as in the Ghetto. Those who read horoscopes for the Jews say they are bad.

ADAM

IRVING FELDMAN

Only light and shades of light
It was, and Eve a meaning there
Now water, now silver, now fire, now air.
Our senses then a slender height

That made sound silence, silence sight,
And this was light; the crystal throat
of air.
Drank the color from the flare.
But here is touch stupid as night.

Death has gathered in the twig
And hisses through the piercing thorn
The dappled leaf till now unseen,

And pours the olive, almond, and fig
From his swollen, blinding horn.
All I know now is green.

Irving Feldman, whose verse has appeared in previous numbers of Commentary, has been living in France for the past year.

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CEDARS OF LEBANON

A MEDIEVAL JEWISH TALE

From "The Parables of Sendebar"

MISHLE SENDEBAR ("The Parables of Sendebar") is the Hebrew version of the "Seven Sages," a popular medieval romance which had its origin in the East and was subsequently transmitted westward. The Eastern group of the "Seven Sages" is known as the *Book of Sindibad,* the Western typical form as the *Seven Sages of Rome.*

There are eight extant versions of the *Book of Sindibad:* Syriac, Greek, Hebrew, Old Spanish, Arabic, and three in Persian. A much larger number of Western versions exists. In Europe, at least 40 different versions have been preserved in over 200 manuscripts and nearly 250 editions.

The basic story goes somewhat as follows: A young prince is tempted by his stepmother, the queen. Rebuffed by him, she accuses the prince of attempting to violate her, and he is condemned by his father, the king, to death. His life is saved by seven wise men, who secure a stay of execution by entertaining the king through seven days with tales demonstrating the wickedness of women. The queen counters with stories about the infidelity of sons. On the eighth day, the prince, who has remained silent, speaks in his own defense, and the woman is punished. Only in the Hebrew is the queen permitted to go free, in accordance with the Talmudic version of the Golden Rule.

The Hebrew adaptation, long acknowledged to be the most important, has never been edited from manuscripts earlier than the first printed edition (Constantinople, 1516). Nor has it ever been translated into English. When I undertook to prepare a new edition along with a reliable English translation for my doctoral dissertation in English literature at New York University (not so far-fetched as it seems, for I was led to *Mishle Sendebar* via the Middle English renderings) I had no idea how fruitful the project was to become. Correspondence turned up unknown manuscripts which arrived via ordinary mail from such unlikely places as the Saltykov-Schedrin Library in Leningrad and the Jewish Theological Seminary in Budapest. I located eighteen manuscripts of *Mishle Sendebar.* Two, in Oxford's Bodleian Library, of much earlier date than the first printed edition, far better in their readings, and containing stories never before attributed to the Hebrew, became the foundation of my edition.

I was led to the theory that the agents of transmission may have been the Radanites, those wide-ranging Jewish merchantmen who forged trade links in the 9th century between France and China and who were the first Europeans to establish direct contact between East and West. *Mishle Sendebar* thus provides another instance in which medieval Jewry conveyed the fruit of Eastern culture to the Christian world for the benefit of mankind as a whole.

My new edition and translation of *Mishle Sendebar* has not yet been published. The selection below, which gives but a taste of the whole, condenses the framework opening and an anti-feminist tale told by one of the sages. In part, the latter will of course be familiar to many readers as the well-known fabliau of "The Weeping Dog."—MORRIS EPSTEIN

IN THOSE days there was a King in the land of India whose name was Bibar; and he was beloved by the inhabitants of India, for he was a mighty upholder of justice. Now he had eighty wives and each of them used to lie with him for one week. When the turn came of the worthiest and the wisest of them all, she made a great feast for all of his princes and his servants.

King Bibar came to the feast that Beria his wife had prepared for him but his heart was saddened and he sat silent in the house of festivity. Now when Beria saw the agitated look of the King, she arose from her royal throne and cast off her earrings and her jewels and fell before the King, saying:

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"How has your maid servant sinned? Why are you not toward me as you were yesterday and the day before that?"

The King replied, "Peace be unto you, Beria. There is a great fear in my heart, for I have grown old in my kingdom, and I have no son to succeed me on my throne. And now my name and the names of my ancestors will be erased from the kingdom of India. This it is that causes me concern."

Beria replied, saying:

"Let us declare a fast and clothe ourselves in sackcloth and ashes and afflict ourselves before God, for He is merciful and ever present to those who search for Him and He responds to all who call upon Him, nor does He reject those who seek Him."

The King was very pleased, and he declared a fast in every city and in each province. And afterward, Bibar came to Beria his wife and she conceived and bore a son, and the King rejoiced, and so did all his princes and servants. And he wrote letters to the hundred and twenty and seven provinces to summon the nobles and princes and the learned sages to a feast in honor of the Prince, and he bestowed lavish gifts on all, with kingly bounty.

And he found among them seven great sages, men of brilliance and discernment. These were their names: Sendebar, Ipokras, Apulin, Lukman, Aristalin, Hind, and Amami.

The King said to them: "Cast the horoscope of my son. See whether he is destined to live or die; whether he will inherit my throne or not."

And they did so and said: "He will live and succeed to the throne; we fear, however, that he may be killed in his twentieth year, for he is destined to be in mortal danger at that time."

The lad grew, and when he was seven, the King said to the sages: "Which among you wishes to teach my son?"

And Sendebar said: "I will teach him." The King gave the Prince to Sendebar, for he was wiser than the other six. The boy was with Sendebar twelve years and six months. Then the King tested his son with riddles, but found in him no wisdom at all. The King grew agitated and struck together his hands, saying: "Is such a one fit to rule or to uphold my kingdom?"

When the King's wrath was assuaged, he said: "Whosoever will teach my son wisdom, to him will I give a third of my kingdom."

Sendebar replied: "I will teach him in six months, so that none in the land will equal him in wisdom."

But the sages were angered and they said: "Why then did you not teach him in these twelve years and a half which he spent with you?"

Sendebar replied: "I was restrained by my youth and by the tender age of the Prince. I wished no one to be like me in all the land. Now I have aged and the youth has grown and I will be happy to leave my wisdom to the Prince."

To this the sages replied: "The words of Sendebar are as vapors and wind and thunder without rain."

Sendebar answered them: "Wisdom in me is like musk and amber—when water is poured on it, its aroma is released. So too is wisdom kindled by jealousy. If I fail to teach the Prince in six months so that he triumphs over all the sages in the kingdom of my lord the King, let my treasure and my life both be forfeit."

Whereupon the King gave his son to Sendebar. Sendebar went out to the desert and erected there a beautiful palace high up on a mountain. He surrounded it with a wall decorated within with vari-colored fabrics and he inscribed on the roofside all the signs of the zodiac and all the stars and planets and he wrote on the walls every book of wisdom. Then he gave orders that no one was to come to him save one old chamberlain, once a day. Sendebar poured his soul into the youth and taught him every book of wisdom; so the youth grew wiser than all the wise men of India.

When the time was up, the King sent messengers to Sendebar to appear before him with his son. Sendebar sent to the King, replying: "On the morrow will I come to you with your son."

That night Sendebar said to the Prince: "I sent word to your father saying, 'On the morrow we will come to you.' But I have not yet cast your horoscope."

And Sendebar arose in the middle of the night. He observed the horoscope, and he saw that if the youth were to open his mouth before seven days had passed, he would be instantly killed. Sendebar was agitated and

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struck together his hands. The youth questioned Sendebar: "What have you seen?"

Sendebar replied: "Lift your eyes heavenward and look for yourself."

Then the youth saw that death awaited him should he open his mouth during the seven days that remained until his twentieth birthday. And he said:

"If it is your wish, I will not open my mouth even for the space of seven months."

To which Sendebar replied: "Arise in the morning and go to your father. And speak neither of good nor of evil to any man until these seven days have gone."

The boy came before the King, who saw that Sendebar was not with his son. The King grew anxious and questioned his son, saying: "Where is Sendebar?"

But the youth kept silent. Now the nobles approached the youth and questioned him, and he answered them not. Then the King said to his wise men, who knew the times: "What say you concerning this?"

They approached and said to the King: "The King requested Sendebar to teach the Prince wisdom, and Sendebar found him a dullard, whereupon he gave him a potion to open his heart; the drink was too strong, the youth has been made dumb."

When the King heard this, he cried a great and bitter cry and he cut off his hair and rent his garments; his servants came to comfort him but he refused to be comforted.

Then came a certain maiden from among his maidens, whom the King had raised, and whom he loved above all his women.

She said to the King: "My lord King! Give him unto me and I will know and understand what is in his heart, for you love me dearly."

Then she brought him into her chamber and said: "Speak! For I know that it is through some craft that you are silent. In your youth you did love me more than your mother. Now, speak to me!"

He did not answer her. She continued to talk to him, and then she embraced him and kissed him. She bared her flesh before him, saying: "Have you seen any woman so beautiful as I? Speak to me and lie with me and we will slay your father who is an old man, a hundred years old. You will reign, and I will be your maidservant!"

When the maiden perceived that the youth had covered his eyes so that he might not behold her nakedness, she knew that he was acting with much cunning. She was sorely frightened, and thought: "If I kill him not, he will open his mouth and relate unto the King my words and deeds and he will order me killed."

So she rent her clothes and disheveled her hair, and went and cried before the King.

The King said to her: "What troubles you?"

She said to the King: "Lo, you said that your son is dumb; but all that he does is false. He came with me into the chamber and I began to talk with him and he seized me and desired to lie with me and he struggled with me and I overpowered him and freed myself."

When the King heard her words, he grew angry, his wrath burned within him. And he said: "Will this one then be a king? He is not fit to rule!"

And he ordered his servants to cut off the Prince's head. Then spoke the six sages, the counselors of the King, concerning his son:

"This youth is wise and acts from an abundance of wisdom. And she, accursed one, tells falsehoods about him! Let us take counsel among ourselves. Perhaps we will be able to rescue the Prince through wisdom, each of us on another day. For if the King repents after he has slain his son, he will turn upon us that we did not deflect his wrath. Now let five of us go to save him from the executioner."

And the one came before the King and prostrated himself and said to him:

"My lord! Hearken to my voice and hasten not to kill your son because of the words of the woman. The wiles of women are many."

The Sage's Story

"I WILL tell you what the world says: 'Wherever you find a beautiful woman who is excessively virtuous, then it is fitting to be on guard against her.' And, if it be your wish, I will tell you what happened to a certain merchant and his wife."

The King said: "Tell me the tale."

"A certain merchant had a wife who was beautiful and overly prudish, and he loved her as his very life. And he said to her: 'Let us both take an oath that whichever of us dies first, the survivor will cleave to no other, nor rejoice in any fashion, nor bathe, nor anoint himself.'

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"This stipulation was agreeable to both and they swore unto each other. Now the merchant journeyed over the sea, and she did not change her clothing, nor bathe, nor anoint herself.

"One day a certain bride chanced to pass through the streets of the city accompanied by sistra and cymbals. The wife heard the din and put her head out of the window. And a certain youth sighted her and lusted after her mightily. From excess of lust he took to his bed. Now a certain old woman came to the door of his house and said to him: 'What ails you that you lie thus? If you have a physical ailment, I shall undertake to cure you.'

"The youth answered her, saying: 'I am not sick. I've only one trouble, in my heart. If you promise to keep my confidence, I'll tell you what it is.'

"She said to him: 'I'll be mum.'

"He answered her: 'There's such-and-such a party who lives at such-and-such a place. I'm sick with desire of her, and if you can help me onto her, I shall reward you generously.'

"The crone replied: 'Done! Just furnish me with ten silver coins.'

"And he gave them to her. She went out to the market place and bought a certain bitch, a plump and a good one, and she fed it bread and fat until it was trained to follow her when she went to the market place. She bought pepper and garlic and cinnamon and fat and made a cake of it and threw it to the bitch.

"Now the old crone went to the home of the lady and she called out to the lady, who then opened the door.

"And the old one said: 'Do me a kindness.'

"And the maiden arose to bring her food and drink. Now she threw some of the dough to the bitch, and fed it. And because the dough was so hot on account of the garlic and pepper kneaded into it, the eyes of the bitch began to drip tears.

"Now the maiden saw the weeping bitch and she said to the crone: 'Why is your dog crying?'

"And the old one replied: 'Alas, how can I tell you of my disgrace?'

"And the maiden said: 'O do tell me! I won't reveal it to anyone!'

"Then the crone spoke thus: 'You see this bitch? Once she was my daughter, a spotless and precious darling. Now a certain young man desired her, and I refused to give her to him. So he cried out to God concerning her and she was transformed into a bitch. And whenever I see a beautiful girl like yourself, I recall the days of my daughter's own youth and beauty, and I weep, and she cries with me.'

"Then the maiden replied, saying: 'O, if it please you, my lady, there's a certain young man who lusts after me, and he has become bedridden because of his huge desire. Won't you go and talk to that young man? Maybe you'll be able to find him, and I'll do anything he wants, without cost to him, so that I won't have to suffer the fate of this bitch.'

"The crone got up and went over to the house of the youth but did not find him. And she said: 'What shall I do about my fee?'

"So she went to the market place to fetch another young man, and she chanced to meet the lady's husband, who had just arrived from a distant land. And she said to him: 'If you like it, I'll provide you with a beautiful lady who'll satisfy your desires. Just pay me.'

"She kept insisting, so he arose and followed her to see who might be the whore in his city. And when he came to the door of his house and went inside, he beheld his wife washing and anointing herself. And she lifted up her eyes and recognized her husband. With great cunning, then, she ran toward him and seized his hair and his beard, and cried: 'So this is the covenant that was between us! I knew just what day you were coming back, and I arranged all this to test you! This is how you behaved in foreign lands!'

"And she began to run, and he kept pleading with her, saying: 'Don't suspect me of anything like that! I came only to see who the whore was in this city!'

"But she kept screaming: 'Not so! the way you came here, that's the way you came to some other house!'

"And he couldn't do a thing with her until he had pacified her with words and brought her back to his house.

"And you, my lord King, do not be ensnared by the deceit of women."

Then the King gave orders not to execute his son.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

Freud & Freudianism

To the Editor of Commentary:

When Hans Meyerhoff replied to the frontal attack on Freud and psychoanalysis by Lillian Blumberg McCall ("Freud and Scientific Truth," April 1958), he took unjustified refuge in modern physics. . . . Mr. Meyerhoff first tried to justify the admitted logical and semantic difficulties of psychoanalysis by stating that the scientific theory of quantum mechanics presents "a great many philosophical puzzles which are by no means resolved—and which interest people beyond the making of new discoveries or new bombs." It should be pointed out that quantum mechanics presents puzzles only to those who think in terms of outmoded concepts. . . . Paradoxes arise only when one tries to apply the ideological formulations of classical physics to quantum physics . . . [which] says at the outset that those old concepts are wrong. . . .

Elsewhere, Mr. Meyerhoff, in defending Freud's stubborn adherence to his *Totem and Taboo* in the face of more recent ethnological data, reminds us of Einstein's belief in the causal deterministic view of the world in face of the theories of modern physics which "rendered this belief rather silly in the eyes of his scientific peers." Aside from the matter of convictions, the analogy here is not at all apt. . . . Einstein was prepared to have his theory of relativity completely invalidated by [any] experimental data. . . . Freud is quoted by Mr. Meyerhoff himself as having stated: "Contradiction is not always refutation. . . . It is my good right to select from ethnological data what would serve me for my analytical work. . . ." But no professed scientist has the right *as a scientist* to *select* those data which fit into his theory and reject those which contradict it. . . .

The fewer comparisons made between psychoanalysis and science the better. Science has claim to a rather solid foundation of careful, controlled, reproducible experiments; psychoanalysis has no such claim. . . . Psychoanalysis can make no claim whatsoever to be listed among the scientific theories of today.

David I. Caplan

Brooklyn College
New York City

To the Editor of Commentary:

I find myself in complete agreement with Lillian Blumberg McCall's views on Freud. When Freud entered the fields of historical or ethnological speculation, he could be as wrong as any other man. Like many lesser men, he often distorted facts to prove a preconceived theory.

Some years ago, when I reviewed *Moses and Monotheism* for a San Francisco paper, I was amazed to learn that Freud not only twisted Weigall's *Life and Times of Akhnaton* into a completely different meaning, but wherever Weigall did not bear out Freud, he would deliberately distort what he said. . . . [For example] he cites Weigall to prove that Akhnaton's religion of Aton did not believe in the immortality of the soul. The only thing wrong with this is that Weigall devoted pages to saying exactly the opposite.

Dean Lipton

San Francisco, California

To the Editor of Commentary:

Mrs. McCall in her exchange with Mr. Meyerhoff unfortunately threw out the baby along with the bath water. By denigrating both Freud's and Mr. Meyerhoff's scholarly integrity, she not only alienates the reader, but of more serious import, she inadvertently uses a Freudian philosophic concept which is highly unscientific: that the critique of the content of a theory is to be evaluated in terms of the personality of the theoretician.

Specifically, Freud—a man of great integrity—made two very basic errors of a philosophic and procedural nature. First, while initially under great attack for his ideas, he accused his detractors of exhibiting a similar type of resistance to them as was evident in his neurotic patients. Hence, the burden of proof was unscientifically placed on the critics; we are still feeling the effects. . . . Even in our daily life, we glibly state about an opponent: "He's sick."

Second, he approached ideas in history, art, literature, and ethnology in a novel but unscientific and irrational manner—he analyzed history and ethnology in terms of an individual psychology. Does it basically matter whether Nietzsche was psychotic? I think not. We need to know the socio-historical roots or matrix of

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his writings—Bismarck's Germany with its imperialistic scope and consequent national grandiosity. . . . It doesn't help us one bit in the understanding of the Kantian categorical imperative [to concede] that Kant was extremely punctual and perhaps compulsive in ordering his personal existence.

Mrs. McCall made some excellent points, but would have performed a vital service if she had applied "less heat" and "more light." . . .

SHELDON ZULKOWITZ

Brooklyn, New York

MRS. MCCALL *writes:*

In my exchange with Hans Meyerhoff, I quoted a passage from Professor A. L. Kroeber's paper on *Totem and Taboo* which criticized Freud's methodological procedure in that it pyramided a series of hypotheses of low degrees of probability. Mr. Meyerhoff, like Freud and Ernest Jones, ignored the objection and chose to read my remarks as an appeal to authority. In reply, he quoted from a *private* communication of Clyde Kluckhohn to Ernest Jones: "I am convinced that the essential universality of the Oedipus complex . . . is now established by the anthropological record."

Mr. Meyerhoff did not refer to the record itself, but he did create the impression that Professor Kroeber rejects the Oedipus complex. This happens not to be the case, nor did I say so. In the second of his two papers on *Totem and Taboo,* Professor Kroeber lectures Ernest Jones for not realizing that Malinowski's data on the Trobriand Island culture is evidence *in support* of the theory.

I would add, however, that Malinowski's data undercuts the biological basis of Freud's theory. To say that children react to particular patterns of family relationships that differ from culture to culture (among the Trobrianders the maternal uncle is the figure of authority) and that within a culture individuals react differently, is simply to say that people react one way or another to their situation in life. This is not a theory but a truism. An adjective like "essential" before "universal" is an enormous qualification, especially since we do not know what preceded or followed Clyde Kluckhohn's statement. The anthropologists' Oedipus complex is not the same as Freud's. And a theory should not be accepted or rejected on authority, but according to the evidence. I agree with Professor Kroeber's observation that psychoanalysis is a closed system that does not readily absorb data from other fields—especially when such data cast doubt on its doctrines. In the passage Mr. Meyerhoff quoted from *Moses and Monotheism* (one of Freud's most dubious speculations), Freud says in effect that he is not an ethnologist; that he doesn't care what the ethnologists say about their own field because he wants to use an obsolete theory they have unanimously rejected; that he will not consider evidence that doesn't suit him; and that if the evidence that does suit him is wrong—so what. Is this science?

The issue isn't Freud's character but the status of psychoanalysis as a scientific theory. . . . I said that psychoanalysis *fails* as often as any other psychiatric treatment. Mr. Meyerhoff translates this into "Everybody knows that psychoanalytic treatment is not the only *cure* for emotional disturbance"—which rather shifts the emphasis. In the first place, even if psychoanalysis had a high rate of cure it would not indicate the validity of the theory. The record of Lourdes and Christian Science is far more impressive than that of psychoanalysis. Second, the performance of psychoanalysis as a therapy is, in fact, dismal (as Mr. Meyerhoff would discover if he read the professional journals). The few spectacular cures of which we know occurred before Freud had developed the theory and some of these while he was still using hypnosis. It doesn't matter how many people think "psychoanalytic theory is hogwash from beginning to end," but it does matter how much of it *is* hogwash. Mr. Meyerhoff says that "psychoanalytic propositions are often such that it is very difficult to specify *objective* tests which could verify (or falsify) them." His italics imply that there are other, subjective tests. If so, I should very much like to know what they are. I should also like to know which of Freud's "basic theories" Mr. Meyerhoff thinks are true and on what grounds. He has said he is not competent to judge the evidence in regard to the death instinct. What about the other theories? . . . The fact that an idea survives adverse criticism is not a test of its worth. If false ideas died out when shown up, the history of the world would be quite different. . . .

What kind of "philosophy" is it which holds that to raise a question of truth is "scurrilous," that waves aside empirical evidence, plays down logical difficulties, and attacks on a personal level? My own belief is that the first concern of philosophy is truth and its discussion is never out of place. . . . Since Mr. Meyerhoff thinks truth is "a serious, technical" matter not suitable for the pages of COMMENTARY, I would be happy to continue the debate with him in any pages he thinks are appropriate. But I don't think he will find it easier going anywhere else.

MR. MEYERHOFF *writes:*

Why bother with Freud if his theory is what Mrs. McCall and Mr. Caplan think it is? If he was an impostor as a scientist, and if psycho-

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analysis as a theory is a big hoax, why argue and prolong a discussion which leads nowhere?

Ashley Montagu ("Letters from Readers," May) raises a point of considerable interest. He urges upon us again that "the Oedipus complex is neither (1) innate, nor (2) universal, but that wherever it occurs (3) it is culturally determined." This is a view shared by many students of anthropology and sociology; yet I have often wondered whether the appeal to "cultural determinism," so frequently invoked in these disciplines, does not raise logical difficulties of its own.

"Determined" is a relational word. It makes sense only by contrast with something which is *not* determined. Thus to use it as an explanatory principle in an analysis of culture always presupposes that there are some factors in this analysis which are not determined, but "free." The blanket endorsement of "cultural determinism" often conceals this dialectical relationship between those aspects of culture which are believed to be "determined" and those which are believed to be "free."

There is another ambiguity; for "culture" is a relational word, too. It makes sense only by contrast with something which is *not* cultural. Culture does not operate in a vacuum, but it must act on and interact with something other than culture. Now, Freud's bio-psychological approach was a way of showing this dialectical relationship between culture and something other than culture, i.e., certain constant, invariant conditions both in human nature and in the physical environment. This does not mean that, say, the Oedipus situation is "biologically" determined. To ask whether it is biologically *or* culturally determined is to raise a spurious issue; for it is both. To discover what culture contributes to anything in human life, it must always be possible to state certain conditions which are not "culturally" determined and which set limits to the process of acculturation.

Of course, Freud may have been mistaken in the choice of his non-cultural (biological) concepts; but it is a common and gross misunderstanding of his thought to assume that he did not recognize the role that culture played in the vicissitudes of the libido. What else was he writing about all his life? The differences dividing the psychoanalytic movement were not, as it is often said even in textbooks, differences over the issue of "cultural determinism." They arose over the issue of choosing a *different set* of constant and invariant conditions in human nature—e.g., Adler's "power drive," Jung's "collective archetypes," or Fromm's system of "basic human needs"—which interact with and set limits to the patterns of culture.

The 7th Assembly District

To the Editor of Commentary:

As a resident of the 7th Assembly District on the West Side of Manhattan for about thirty years, I am impelled to call your attention to one of the most insidious political campaigns waged in recent years. This is the Leadership Campaign, summer of 1957, which Professor Robert Lekachman of Barnard College loftily describes, in the April issue of Commentary, as a triumph of civic virtue. In truth, his article on "How We Beat the Machine" is a distortion of the facts and a masterpiece of omission. . . .

Far from being a crusade by knightly amateurs against the wicked dragons of Tammany Hall, William F. Ryan's leadership fight against the William J. Sheldrick Association was a hard-bitten, coldly calculated battle in the tradition of the best rough- and-tumble political fracases. . . . Mr. Ryan and his aides paraded as young "Ivy League" liberals . . . allegedly debating "the issues," and describing their platform in Churchillian prose. But they demonstrated that they could fight not only on the beaches and landing fields, but also in the gutters and, if need be, the sewers. A word-by-word rebuttal might becloud the basic evil of Mr. Lekachman's dissertation. It is more important to pinpoint the one issue which highlighted the ugliness of the campaign. In fact, Mr. Lekachman himself underlines the problem on page 297 of Commentary, when he writes: ". . . it was a local issue, Manhattantown, which did most to win."

Manhattantown was a Title I development conceived after the war to rebuild, with middle-income apartments, a slum area extending from 97th Street to 101st Street and from Amsterdam Avenue to Central Park West in Manhattan. Private developers operating through a private corporation purchased the land at a reduced price after it had been condemned under the City of New York's power of eminent domain. The Federal and city governments had subsidized the sale.

The Manhattantown Corporation had no political label. It evicted hundreds of tenants regardless of party, re-rented some of the apartments and leveled others, using part of the vacant space for a parking lot. As Mr. Lekachman correctly stated: "The developers of the project seemed to have found it more profitable to collect parking lot fees and rents from not yet demolished buildings. . . ." This outrage occurred many years before Sheldrick became Leader, and at a time when the Robert B. Blaikie Club dominated the 7th Assembly District. But Mr. Lekachman seems to have made a great discovery. He says: "Here the facts are damning

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. . . three of the businessmen who had shared in the profits of this speculation had contributed to Sheldrick funds. . . ." He failed to reveal whether the contribution was the customary $25 or $50, nor did he realize that the facts also damned Mr. Ryan and his supporters. These same businessmen had contributed to the Blaikie Club in which Mr. Ryan had been an active member and which had elected Mr. Ryan's political mentor, Dan Kelly.

In another area, the voters would have promptly tagged the issue as "phony." But in the heated atmosphere of the West Side, careful manipulation gave the facts a seemingly important meaning. Here, then, Mr. Ryan's cohorts, who resented being called ADA Communists, demonstrated that they had learned a few tricks from the Reds. Using the techniques of the Big Lie and Guilt by Association, the alleged idealists repeatedly accused Sheldrick of being responsible for the Manhattantown fiasco. In an area of bad housing, repetition succeeded in pinning the blame on Tammany.

I have gone into this facet of Mr. Lekachman's article at length because it leads to the paramount evil of Mr. Ryan's campaign. The Tammany-killer capitalized on race tension and exploited it with a master diplomat's subtlety. No one can point to any line of intolerance in his campaign literature, it must be conceded. The damage was done by innuendo, by word of mouth, at the district captain level.

During the last few years, a sub-surface feeling of discontent had been festering on the West Side. Housing conditions were deteriorating and landlords grossly increased their profits by converting fine old brownstone houses into high-rent rooming houses. As Mr. Lekachman wrote, this is an area where: ". . . housing is desperately short, excessively expensive, and cynically exploited." Fetid slums developed in the shadow of staid, well-run apartment houses. The only people who would pay the rents were Puerto Ricans and Negroes . . . who were unfairly barred from newer apartments. Friction resulted as old neighborhoods changed their identities. . . . As if conditions were not serious enough, Mr. Ryan charged into the arena on his white steed. He widely proclaimed his association with the Office of the District Attorney of New York County. As a former assistant district attorney, he promised to "clean up the district." He could not have honestly meant that he would arrest or prosecute anyone. That was not in his power. . . . Possibly he sought to capitalize on the popular conception of a young district attorney . . . [who] epitomizes the law, like the guntoting sheriff who drives the bad men out of town. Maybe. . . . Mr. Ryan believed that cultivating a public misconception was fair in a fight against Tammany.

Hundreds of voters, however, interpreted the promise to "clean up the district" as a promise to shut down the rooming houses, clear out the minorities, and prevent others from moving in. It was enough to turn the balance, and all in the name of civic virtue. If Mr. Lekachman had descended from his ivy-clad towers at Barnard to the doorbell-ringing level of the campaign, he would have tasted the real flavor of the fight. "Cleaning up the district" meant one thing to the voters, although it may have meant another thing to Mr. Ryan, who may not have deliberately sought to stir up racialism, but did nothing to fight it. The inevitable result of his tactics was to stir up these bad feelings. That is how he demeaned the very concept of idealism.

That was the evil of Mr. Ryan's victory in the 7th Assembly District in September 1957. In not dissecting this aspect of the campaign, Mr. Lekachman's article was guilty of an almost similar evil of omission.

ARNOLD A. LEVIN

New York City

MR. LEKACHMAN *writes:*

So that readers can keep the characters straight, let me first identify Mr. Levin and myself. Levin has been an active member of the Sheldrick organization and I have participated in the affairs of the Riverside Democrats, a fact the title of my essay implies. My activity has extended to the ringing of a good many doorbells on occasions when the air conditioning in my ivory tower failed.

In concentrating upon the Manhattantown issue, Mr. Levin ignores the campaign's other cries: failure to support Stevenson, patronage, and indifference to housing violations. Dare I assume that he agrees with my account of them? As for Manhattantown itself, the bulk of Mr. Levin's remarks are irrelevant, for the issue is not when the project began, nor whether some businessmen contributed to Blaikie as well as Sheldrick (our treasurer would be grateful for a list of businessmen who make "customary" $25 or $50 contributions), but the prominence in the Sheldrick organization of those who profited from the project. Mr. Levin does not deny that one such person ran for party office on the Sheldrick slate. His engaging rhetoric fails to reveal another fact: the whole issue arose after a Sheldrick claim of credit for exposing the Manhattantown scandal. The fanciful nature of the claim aroused the anger of many Riverside Democrats and developed into the exposure of three Sheldrick supporters among the profiteers. The incident cast a good deal of justified doubt upon the veracity of Sheldrick claims.

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Mr. Levin links Manhattantown to Blaikie, Blaikie to Kelly, and Kelly to Ryan. But the facts are these: the group who organized the Riverside Democrats had worked together during the 1956 campaign, independently of either club. Only much later did Kelly and some of the Blaikie people support the Riverside Democrats. Ryan did belong to the Blaikie Club but his role was exceedingly unimportant. Perhaps it is interesting to observe that Mr. Levin himself had been, at the same time, a key member of the Blaikie Club and had edited the Blaikie newsletter.

Nor does the evidence support the claim that the Riverside Democrats stirred up race antagonism. Before, during, and after the campaign many Puerto Ricans and Negroes worked for the club. Since the primary, the housing committee of the club, which includes both Negroes and Puerto Ricans, has inspected many buildings, reported many violations, and pressed city officials for remedial action. This is what cleaning up the district meant during the campaign. It means the same thing still.

This letter is already too long. I shall conclude it with a comment on the Red issue. How Sheldrick forces used this issue is well illustrated in Mr. Levin's own words: "Here, then, Mr. Ryan's cohorts who resented being called ADA Communist, demonstrated that they had learned a few tricks from the Reds." Without saying so directly, this sentence implies that there has been a relation between the Riverside Democrats and the ADA and that the ADA is Communist influenced. But there has been absolutely no organizational link between the Riverside Democrats and the ADA. A very few members of the Riverside Democrats also belong to the ADA. And, as Mr. Levin must know, the ADA specifically excludes Communists from membership. Through its life, no trace of Communist influence has infected it.

Mr. Berger's Accuracy

To the Editor of Commentary:

I gave Professor Morroe Berger's article ("America's Syrian Community," April) to a "Syrian" (Lebanese) friend whom I respect as an intelligent, informed, and sensitive person. He "tried it out" on a few of his friends.

We have been sampling one another's propaganda, from Zionists and Arab nationalists, with interest for several years, for the mutual adjustment of our respective senses of perspective and humor. In this case I was interested in whether the article agreed with his experience, and what his reaction to such a presentation would be.

In short, he and his friends were amazed by the accuracy of the description of the American "Syrian" community; such an effort had not come to their attention even from the pen of a member of their own group.

Exception was taken to the validity of only one minor point. Regardless of their attitude toward T. E. Lawrence and Faisal as individuals, their gratification over the freedom gained seems to be unquestioning. They demur at the skepticism represented by the couplet quoted by Mr. Berger, as not being representative of their attitude.

But the score was 99 per cent and my friend's reaction was that, if he were not afraid of being accused of advertising among the people he serves as a professional man, he would like to get reprints of the article and distribute them to all the local "Syrians"!

Thayer S. Warshaw

Lawrence, Mass.

Israeli Intellectuals

To the Editor of Commentary:

I am a regular reader and, very often, an admirer of Commentary. I don't always agree with your contributors, but never did an article make me as angry as Meir Mindlin's superficial account of Israeli intellectual life in general and its youth in particular ("Israel's Intellectuals," March).

Even though I belong to the bygone generation over forty, I cannot find the slightest resemblance between our private library and the one described by Mr. Mindlin as "typical." Israel is one of the countries with the highest book production per capita in the world. The run on world literature—fiction as well as science—is such that almost every interesting new book disappears from the market within a few days. I wonder what people do with these books?

Two to three thousand sold copies are considered normal for a Hebrew book. Mosheh Shamir's *King of Flesh and Blood,* a historical novel written in a style that does not make for easy reading, sold more than ten thousand (the book has now been published in English and Spanish). Discussions about books are common in Israeli social life, and everyone wants to be up to date in respect to both Hebrew and foreign literature. Besides, classics and best-sellers generally appear in Hebrew translation.

I would not venture to present myself as an expert on Israeli youth, even though I have lived in the country for almost twenty-five years, but as far as I can judge, Mr. Mindlin is profoundly mistaken. The so-called "cleavage between the older and younger generation" is

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certainly a fact, but it is by no means an unmitigated disaster. In this young generation, something has come true of the dream their parents dreamt when they uprooted themselves and followed the "Zionist myth." This youth is free of the "double loyalty" normal among Jews in the Diaspora. They are undivided. The Canaanites represented an excess, and the fact that they have disappeared proves how little foothold they had among the youth.

It is a fact that the youth has become so Israeli that it lost contact with World Jewry and with part of the Jewish past and historical inheritance, while other parts of the tradition, almost forgotten in the Diaspora, came alive. The discussion now going on around this problem is by no means "shadowy." Maybe it has not yet reached the depth the problem deserves, but it is very serious. Among the recent events which stirred the public, and especially the youth, there was the overwhelming experience of the meeting between Israel youth and Russian Jewish youth during the festival in Moscow last summer—not exactly an administrative matter.

One fact should not be forgotten: but for this young generation, the State of Israel would probably not have celebrated its tenth anniversary—small wonder that the War of Liberation is one of the central themes of their literature! What is wrong with the spiritual attitude of a generation which performed that task, even if they joke about "Zionism?" There remains the question why the term "Zionism" was discredited. Perhaps the reason is not only the cynicism of Israeli youth.

LENI YAHIL

Israel Embassy
Stockholm, Sweden

MR. MINDLIN *writes*:

In most respects Mrs. Yahil's letter speaks for itself, and illustrates many points I made.

1. "The run on world literature"; I deal with this below.

2. "Two to three thousand copies sold"; I mentioned in my article "some very encouraging developments, such as . . . the fact that verse sales can compete with those in much larger countries, recent volumes . . . having sold more than five thousand copies soon after publication." I should like to add what a veteran authority on Hebrew literature once remarked to me: "There were about two or three thousand serious Hebrew readers some thirty years ago, and there are still only about two or three thousand such readers today."

3. I agree that *The King of Flesh and Blood* does not make for easy reading.

4. "Classics and best-sellers appear in Hebrew translation"; best-sellers, yes (*Gone With the Wind, Forever Amber, Désirée*)—but in an article on intellectuals I thought one should stick to literature. Classics, well, 19th-century ones; the Russians, Dickens, Thackeray, Balzac, Flaubert, Hugo. A glance at the bibliography appended to the Israel Government Yearbooks will show that modern classics are translated sporadically and erratically (some Valéry dialogues, but no Proust; only Joyce's *Portrait;* no Faulkner, no Virginia Woolf, etc., etc.). Important writers, such as Saul Bellow, Anthony Powell, Ivy Compton-Burnett, Michel Butor, Alain Robbe-Grillet, L. P. Hartley, *et al,* are completely unknown. As for "what people do with these books" (especially the Hebrew Classics), doesn't Mrs. Yahil know what happens to all those Bar Mitzvah presents? Everyone has bookshelves.

5. Nowhere did I say that the cleavage between the generations is an "unmitigated disaster" or any other kind of disaster; it is just a fact, as even Mrs. Yahil admits. As for Israeli youth being "undivided," by which I assume Mrs. Yahil means they are uncomplicated, single-minded, think uniformly—I would never accuse Israeli intellectual youth of being as dull as all that.

6. A reading of Nathan Shamam's account of the visit of the Israeli delegation to the Moscow Youth Festival shows an awakening awareness, among the left-wing delegates, of the plight of Russian Jews, and their sufferings, but hardly a return to tradition as (so nebulously) envisaged by the proponents of "Jewish consciousness." Among young Israeli intellectuals (excepting the party hacks, of course) the "Jewish consciousness" drive is taken as a joke, but one that is wearisome by now.

It would be very sad indeed if Israelis could only be presented to the world as propaganda stereotypes. It would not show much respect for American Jewry to expect it to be fed exclusively on the puerile pap of propaganda, for dialogue between Israel and the Diaspora is only possible when we know each other as we really are. And the picture I tried to sketch was very far indeed from being all black.

Parents & Children

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I finished reading the story "Home for Pesach," by Sylvia Rothchild, in the April edition of COMMENTARY with a mixture of sorrow, resentment, and anger.

The picture of a daughter condescendingly and superciliously sitting in judgment of her parents is revolting to me. "It pleases me to be indulgent and passive . . . no longer impatient

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with my mother and angry at my father." Or again "I imagine that whatever dignity my parents have comes from their refusal to accommodate themselves to me."

Is this then the repayment to parents for a lifetime of personal privations, for years of anxiety and devotion to their children? Is "indulgence" and "passivity" to be the reward, or an occasional "pilgrimage" to the city? How sharply contrasted are the demands of our religious tradition, which the author off-handedly and disrespectfully reviles in the post-Seder episode. Maimonides, quoting the Talmud, states: How far does respect go; even if he was dressed in expensive clothes, and sitting in the place of honor before a large assembly, and his father and mother came and tore his clothes, and struck him on the head, and spit before him, he must not shame them. Rather he must remain silent and fear the King, the King of Kings, who commanded him thus. He further quotes: The honor of father and mother is a great positive commandment, and also the fear (or respect) of father and mother. Scripture likened them to the honor and respect which is due to God Himself. (A careful analysis of pertinent Talmudic sources fully corroborates this statement.)

Nachmanides quotes the above as the reason for the inclusion of "Honor thy father and mother" in the first five commandments, which deal with relations between man and God, as opposed to the second five, which deal with relations between man and man.

I feel that "Home for Pesach" is disrespectful and irreverent in both areas. To be considered "adjusted" or "modern" must we turn our backs on all of those traditions and values which hundreds of generations have held sacred? Must the "lobster" be an "antidote" to "potato pancakes"?

Kindly forgive my utilizing some overly harsh statements and expressions. But I believe it to be the moral obligation of a rabbi to cry out against the values which I feel are expressed in this article. If I am mistaken in my interpretation of the story, I beg the author's pardon and forgiveness.

(Rabbi) SHERMAN D. SIFF
Post Jewish Chaplain
Fort Bragg, N. C.

MRS. ROTHCHILD *writes:*

I'm sorry that Rabbi Siff misunderstood "Home for Pesach." It was intended as a story of love and respect, even reverence.

"Home for Pesach" is a *story*, written to dramatize an idea and describe a bit of Jewish life as it is today. Let it be clear that it is a story. Sylvia Rothchild doesn't play the piano. She has no brothers, fat or lean. Her parents are sensitive, articulate people to whom she has been talking since she learned how. There is no Mrs. Johnson, with or without dogs.

Despite all this, however, many readers have writen to tell me how true it is, and it *is* true. Its "I" represents our modern Jewish generation that hesitates between its past and its future, its Jewish guilt and its American temptations. The parents in the story are symbols of traditional Judaism, with its order and its faith, its poverty and trouble. The inarticulate sister and brother are our friends and neighbors. Mrs. Johnson is the "outside world." But the children haven't been lost. So don't be so sad!

They won't, however, be saved by a commandment to honor and respect. They'll be saved by love and perhaps guilt. Honor and respect can sometimes be earned, sometimes not. If they are demanded as a duty, they become meaningless—something dry and cold to be depended upon when love is dead. I've explored the tragedy of the gulf between parents and children in many COMMENTARY stories, primarily because I believe that our personalities, our society, and our Jewishness are all dependent upon what kind of children and parents we are. I'm afraid, however, that you are mistaken in the notion that parents deserve payment for the role their natures place them in. Where is it written that we can or should be repaid for parental anxiety and work? I was taught that a parent is to devote himself to his children as he serves God, without concern for payment. The pleasure of watching children grow is payment enough. If there is any thanks it is forwarded to a succeeding generation. I mother my children, in "payment" for the mothering I received, and their payment to me will come in their nurturing of their own children. It also follows that my feelings of responsibility and protectiveness toward my parents is a reflection of their attitudes toward my grandparents. The commandment that was suitable in the simple patriarchal society that first knew it has a different ring today. For myself, I prefer love and understanding to honor and respect. Fear I could not bear, and neither could my Orthodox mother or grandmother before me.

If this be irreverence, Rabbi, let us make the most of it. In any case, let us remember that it is the moral obligation of a rabbi to concern himself with what "should be." But it is equally the obligation of a writer to describe life as it is. To ignore life as it is, or to misunderstand it, is to despair of ever making it as it should be.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Novelist of South Africa*

MIDGE DECTER

THE PRICE OF DIAMONDS is Dan Jacobson's third novel. In another time, perhaps, or in another country, the consistently lavish praise heaped on Mr. Jacobson's earlier works, *The Trap* and *A Dance in the Sun,* would have been enough to make the appearance of his third book a much awaited literary occasion. But he is, in this time of movements, trends, generations—when people get excited about new novels mostly in proportion to how much they reveal about the problems of our culture and what they predict about the moral and spiritual climate of our children—an intractably lone voice, and one that might seem too quiet to be heard above the beat and angry uproar. And then he writes about South Africa, a country which, for all its richness of political and social tension, seems to be rather far away from the center of our concerns. The *New York Times Book Review,* for instance, because *The Price of Diamonds* is about a crime and one of its leading characters a detective, saw fit to have the book reviewed by the man who runs the weekly column on mystery fiction. Once having been called a remarkable writer with a remarkable talent, Mr. Jacobson seems to present no further problems to his critics.

"Remarkable" is probably not the word for this work—it seems patronizing and improper when applied to a prose style so fixed and controlled and to a literary intention so concentrated, as do those other words for young writing, "promising" and "talented"—but Dan Jacobson is something better: a man whose character and intelligence grow into and out of one another, who has, in the service of that character and that intelligence, nothing left to learn about craft, and who says exactly what and as much as he means to say. These virtues (and put this way they do seem austere ones) are precisely the virtues needed in the management of Mr. Jacobson's theme—which is, very crudely, the meaning of being an honorable man when to do so goes against the laws of the surrounding nature—and to convey the way he wants to look at things—which is with detachment and wisdom.

Mr. Jacobson was born and grew up in South Africa (he now lives in England), and South Africa is his subject and will probably continue to be so, under whatever name or location he gives it. For that country—which is a brilliantly concrete and specific place in his writing, full of landscapes, weathers, private languages—is also nothing less than the very special and pointed vision he has of the problem of being human. In no other country in the world, perhaps, do the conditions of everyday life make such an unending assault on the self-image of the man with a Western conscience as they do in Mr. Jacobson's homeland. This assault on the self-image comes not merely from the fact that South African white society oppresses and terrorizes black men—an individual, as individual, can at least partially dissociate himself from the cruelty practiced by those around him, can even find it fertile ground for cultivating a feeling of heroism or righteousness. The problem that pursues Dan Jacobson through his books and stories grows out of the peculiar mixture of a life that is genuinely comfortable, pleasant, desirable even, set squarely on the foundations of another kind of life almost inconceivable in its squalor and dislocation and suffering. To the outsider haunted by the record of white exploitation of the blacks, the situation in South Africa offers the relief of being potentially explosive. To Mr. Jacobson, it is the chastening experience of having lived, and lived well, and aspired to live better, by a system of crying injustice. Such an

*A review of *The Price of Diamonds,* by Dan Jacobson, Knopf, 207 pp. (paperback), $1.45.

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experience gives the problem of human decency its true proportion and keeps it alive and glowing. In *A Dance in the Sun* the narrator remembers:

"Time passed in the garden, in the stoep, in the back-yard, while we trudged to school or idled holidays away on our bicycles, and shyness and silence gave way to talk and stories of pleasures that were so distant from us that we knew they could never be ours, of griefs so great and distant that we could not understand how this person who had borne them should be standing in front of us with a spade or a broom in his hand, talking evenly, as if the earth had not swallowed up his mother's body, as if the farmer who had beaten him so that he could still show us the scars on his arms and shoulders were not still alive and perhaps doing the same thing to another. And already there stirred within us the first uneasy strivings toward guilt and pity that were later to hunt us and shame us in our own country."

To the boy looking back, the bicycles and back yards, the gardens (and they hint to us of pleasant suburban streets lined with big and comfortable homes) are as real as the stories of the once beaten and scarred kaffir. Together they make up the truth of his childhood; and neither can be remembered without instantly bringing to mind the other.

In the problem of reconciling the two memories and giving each its due, Mr. Jacobson has found his vision and his statement: that man cannot aggrandize the proportions of his own small nature, cannot finally be altered, by the knowledge of evil. This is the kind of statement that comes to no conclusion, but can only be the basis for a continual exploration. For the purposes of his exploration Mr. Jacobson has needed the discipline of a tightly, perfectly rounded incident or set of incidents—in the three novels thus far they have centered around crimes—to keep what he has to say from getting turned on its head. He has had to set up his story with elaborate promises of a neat denouement; for when a conclusion is made inevitable in this way, by such things as the motion of the plot and suspense, the author's refusal to draw it can be understood as the real point he is making, instead of as his failure to make a point at all.

In *The Trap,* the farmer Van Schoor discovers that he has been betrayed by his "good boy," the kaffir Willem. Van Schoor had been comfortably pleased with himself for his absolute faith in the black man—he had even, without investigating further, accepted Willem's story of a homosexual attack and fired another much-needed hand—only to find Willem in the hands of the police for stealing his sheep. Van Schoor pounds his fists into Willem's smashed and bleeding face; he is purged by his rage at truth. But afterward Willem's partner in crime, the white man who with Willem had been stealing from the farmer and who had been the one to betray Willem to the police, sits down at Van Schoor's table to have a cup of coffee with him. It is with this cup of coffee, not the "truth," that the book ends.

In *A Dance in the Sun* the narrator and his companion pledge themselves, through the operation of pity and conscience, to bear witness for the kaffir Joseph and against the white man Fletcher—which would have meant in fact to accuse Fletcher of kidnapping or murder. But Joseph has unearthed the truth about the crime Fletcher committed against him and his family, and has asked the boys to support him, not to bring Fletcher before the law but only to blackmail him into taking Joseph back into his household. The boys go off to finish their holiday "smarting under the treatment we had just received, and the knowledge of how we had exposed ourselves to it . . ." and Fletcher is left dancing like a madman at the knowledge that for the whole life before him there would be Joseph's subservience and Joseph's victory over him.

Both the earlier books are about relations between black men and white men. Both take place on farms in the middle of the veld, with its hard cracked earth, its thorn trees and its furious sunlight—the perfect landscape for the promise of finality and on the other hand irresolution. *Diamonds,* which has moved into town (the veld is there only underneath the scrubby bushes and lawns of civilization and waiting silently all around the outskirts), represents a kind of relaxation into comedy and an abstraction of the author's problem. In the town, called Lyndhurst, things become more complicated. The town is a place of back yards and gardens and of the middle classes. In the town, for instance, there are Jews and there are businesses and there is Legemco, a branch of the South African diamond monopoly. Lyndhurst is a place built, literally, on diamond mines; and diamonds breed crime—not social crime but crime for profit—so there is an un-

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derworld. But if things there are more complicated, they are also more abstract and can even be terribly funny: diamonds are after all dirty little stones that come out of the ground; the economy of Lyndhurst is founded on some laws called the Illegal Diamond Buying Laws, which have nothing to do with human values but are only a construct of the diamond monopoly, itself a construction, for maintaining high diamond values; and the question of a man's relation to some dirty little stones and the laws that protect them is really more like a question of his relation to himself, a very abstract question indeed.

Diamonds is the story of how Manfred Gottlieb, husband to Riva, partner to Fink ("Fink and Gottlieb—Manufacturers' Representatives"), father to Irvine (off in Johannesburg learning to be a doctor) accidentally comes into possession of a few illegal diamonds and of how he holds onto them, not to get rich with, but in order to enact a fantasy of heroic law-breaking and mastery. His fantasy primarily involves his partner, Fink: Fink the rebel, the radical, the lone wolf, who for years had been shouting his program for the destruction of the diamond interests and his threats that he, Fink, would personally fly in the face of Legemco one of these days. In the dialogue of their long partnership, Fink had become to Gottlieb the voice of the world "out there," a world that promised wonders in which he could not believe and then reproached him for his timidity and lack of faith. ("Fink, you are a kind of socialist." "Gottlieb, you are a slave. With a slave's mind.") When the diamonds are left with him, Gottlieb believes they are intended for Fink—that his partner has finally acted on his threats—and that by hiding them away he will with one act become superior to I.D.B., to Fink, to the whole, wide, beckoning, threatening world:

" 'But I meant to test you by showing you these diamonds,' Gottlieb then permitted Fink to say: 'and here I find you have been even more severely tested than I planned, and Gottlieb, you are unruffled. How did you manage it?' 'I have my reserves, Fink.' 'I can see that you have reserves of iron, Gottlieb,' Fink was then encouraged to say. 'Thank you, Fink—but please—don't embarrass me with such praises.' And with these last imagined words of his own in his ears, Gottlieb fell asleep."

In the end Gottlieb commits a crime, though not the crime he had thought himself prepared to commit (from which he is saved by seeing an enactment of its consequences, as it were, beforehand) and Gottlieb and Fink become reconciled to one another and to their respective lives. This story, with every one of its strands pulled into place and tied neatly, is just as inconclusive as its predecessors. That is, the two men end up where they started—except they no longer have the illusion that such things as diamonds afford them the possibility of heroic action—and the life to which they become reconciled is a life still caught in the same tangle of comforts and fears, of getting along, and getting along well, while at the same time being dependent on a "system" that constantly threatens their sense of their own reality. The diamonds are indeed disposed of forever, but the dust they raise as they roll down the side of a great empty pit is the dust of South Africa.

Mr. Jacobson is a man who keeps his temper and his perceptions cool. He is a master at creating the "small" book, in which each and every detail must contribute to a strict accounting for the flow of events or the behavior of the characters but still have a convincing existence of its own. In *Diamonds,* for instance, the relations of Gottlieb to his wife and son and Fink to his daughters are dealt with and described only insofar as they are absolutely necessary to an understanding of the predicament of the two men and to furthering the process of the plot. And yet the author has managed to create a whole live world of family that we can see easily for its vividness and recognize easily for its rightness. Even the names of the children (Irvine, Althea, etc.) become the clue to a story of humble, ambitious fathers who push their sons and daughters beyond themselves and are then left behind to nurse the fear of being abandoned. In order to sharpen the meaning of the problem represented by his main characters, Mr. Jacobson has made them Jews: people not quite alien to the earth that gives forth the precious stones, but who cannot possess it either. (As Manfred Gottlieb wanders through Lyndhurst on his nightly excursions to the underworld, the town is his home, yet he calls its inhabitants "these people.") But quite apart from their symbolic function, Gottlieb and Fink and Riva and their children are more accurately Jewish and more meaningfully Jewish than any other Jewish characters I know of in contemporary fiction. No particular point is made of their being Jews, they do

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not have to discuss it, the author does not have to mention its relevance to their situation or their feelings; they just *exist* in the way they must. To make every single element in a work of fiction serve its exact purpose, as Mr. Jacobson does, and yet to make of each something that has its own reality, that exists, that persuades, that moves, all by itself—this is art of a very high order.

Still—with the proof of the pudding on one's very tongue—it is difficult not to feel that the unfailing detachment, precision, and self-control of all Mr. Jacobson's work (particularly this book, since it is the most "relaxed") point to something more than the operation of his literary intelligence. In the whole of his writing there is not a single gratuitous detail—thrown in for love or even just because it has occurred to him—not a gesture, not a response that does not have its exactly defined place in the whole. And obversely, not one thing any of his characters ever does or says is done or said without being carefully accounted for and predicted, not only by the kind of person he is made to be but by something explicitly referred to in his history. *Diamonds* is a book almost frightening in this regard. It cannot be that Mr. Jacobson is incapable of making mistakes; the kind of irony with which he touches his material is as capable of mistakes as is passion. The truth of the matter is that Mr. Jacobson works almost as much by a principle of evading the "wrong" objects and perceptions as by finding the right ones. The principle of evasion is for him an honorable, not a cowardly, one, and one that must cost him a great deal of anguish and self-effacement; for clearly what he is pushing away, excluding, at every moment he writes is the chaos he does not yet feel adequate to—the chaos of things gratuitously ugly and mean, and of the feelings in himself for which he has no respect. He does not permit himself, or his characters, the rage that might contradict his ironic, humane intelligence. At the end of *Diamonds* the perpetually angry Fink says to Gottlieb: "When all around us there is nothing in the world except what we make, Fink was busy making such jokes and such tricks. . . . That is why I tell you, Gottlieb, I am a man to be forgiven, not a man that you should ask forgiveness from."

But the gentleness of *Diamonds* is deceptive. There is a kind of fury in the close arrangement of the writing which comes not from the knowledge that "there is nothing in the world except what we make" but from the sense, the South Africa-born sense, that there is much too much in the world we have not made and can do nothing about. This sense, too, is part of Mr. Jacobson's vision, the part, if he let it, that could spur him to move beyond the limits he sets for himself to be a writer of "big" books —and a major novelist.

Acheson vs. Kennan

RUSSIA, THE ATOM AND THE WEST. By GEORGE F. KENNAN. Harper. 116 pp. $2.50.

POWER AND DIPLOMACY. By DEAN ACHESON. Harvard University Press. 137 pp. $3.00.

Reviewed by GORDON A. CRAIG

WHEN, in the course of his lectures over the BBC last December, George Kennan proposed that "a general withdrawal of American, British, and Russian armed power from the heart of the Continent" might reduce the tensions between the East and the West and increase the chances that Europe's fortunes might be worked out peaceably, his words had a sensational impact in the countries of the Western alliance and revived interest in, and won new supporters for, the idea of "disengagement." They were received with less enthusiasm here, not only in the ranks of the administration but even within his own party. In particular, they brought forth a pungent rejoinder from Mr. Dean Acheson, who went so far as to accuse Mr. Kennan of failure to understand the realities of power.

Mr. Kennan's lectures have now been published, and anyone who reads them will not find it difficult to understand why Mr. Acheson was so exercised. They are marked by the eloquence that has always been the distinguishing characteristic of Mr. Kennan's writing, and which is particularly moving here as he warns of the terrible dangers that accompany every step we take in our foreign policy. But in cold print his proposals for disengagement are so vague that one is never sure exactly what it is he has in mind; they are often supported by nothing but his personal assurances that they will work; and they seem, indeed, calculated to encourage the remnants of isolationism in this country.

The best way of illustrating this point is to

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take a passage that is central to his argument. Mr. Kennan insists that we must get over the "obsession that the Russians are yearning to attack and occupy Western Europe." The Soviet threat, he argues, is a combined military and political one, "with the accent on the political." If there were no American or British troops in Europe, the "problem of defense for the continental nations would be primarily one of the internal health and discipline of the respective national societies, and the manner in which they were organized to prevent the conquest and subjugation of their national life by unscrupulous and foreign-inspired minorities in their midst." To deal with this, militia units rather than regular military forces would suffice, for "it is on the front of police realities, not on regular military battlefields, that the threat of Russian Communism must primarily be met." Now, there is something in this, of course; but, if we remember that in the one case where American troops were in fact "disengaged" from an area of strategic importance—that is, in Korea—the result was not internal subversion but Communist aggression from without, the argument is not entirely persuasive. It is rendered even less so when Mr. Kennan, having declared regular military units unnecessary, immediately suggests that the militia be trained so as to "prepare them not only to offer whatever overt resistance might be possible to a foreign invader but also to constitute the core of a civil resistance movement on any territory that might be overrun by the enemy." The accent does not, in short, seem to be on the political at all; and, within the confines of one paragraph, Mr. Kennan appears to have reversed his position completely.

He continues with a mystifying passage in which he argues that the militia should be so disposed as to defend the country, not at the frontier, but "at every village crossroads." "The purpose," he explains, "would be to place the country in a position where it could face the Kremlin and say to it: 'Look here, you may be able to overrun us, if you are unwise enough to attempt it, but you will have a small profit from it: we are in a position to assure that not a single Communist or other person likely to perform your political business will be available to you for this purpose; you will find here no adequate nucleus of a puppet regime; on the contrary, you will be faced with the united and organized hostility of an entire nation. . . .'" One wonders just what part of the world Mr. Kennan is thinking of. Is there the slightest possibility of any government in Western Europe being able in the foreseeable future to make such claims? A moment's reflection on the present political situation in France, Germany, or Italy should be enough to show that there is not. Western Europe is not exactly crowded with village Hampdens; and, this being true, Mr. Kennan's further statement, that he can give his "personal assurance that any country which is in a position" to speak to Moscow in the language suggested above "will have little need of foreign garrisons to assure its immunity from Soviet attack," rather loses its force.

Mr. Kennan never makes entirely clear the extent of the area which he believes should be evacuated by American and British troops; and at times it almost seems as if he is thinking of a total American disengagement—a withdrawal not only from the European continent but from other areas of conflict as well. Early in this book, he makes the curious statement: "To my own countrymen, who have often asked me where best to apply the hand to counter the Soviet threat, I have . . . had to reply: to our own American failings, to the things we are ashamed of . . . to the racial problem, to the conditions in our big cities, to the problems of education and environment for our young people. . . ." Coupled with his surprising lack of enthusiasm for American economic aid to undeveloped areas, this lends an unfortunate—and surely unintended—isolationist flavor to parts of his argument. It is probable that what he really has in mind is the withdrawal of troops from Central Europe alone, the clearing of an area like that delineated in the Rapacki plan. Assuming this, is it not also true, however, that once an American withdrawal began, even from this limited area, the pressures at home and abroad would mount until it was total? And, once it was total, would it not be final? And who would benefit from that? Even if the Soviets withdrew within their own boundaries, they would not have far to travel to return; and they would not even have to return to bring pressure to bear upon their Western neighbors, who would no longer have NATO to protect them. For there should be no doubt that, if the United States withdrew its forces from Europe, NATO—already weak—would collapse.

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THE differences between Mr. Kennan's approach to these matters and Mr. Acheson's have been made clear in the Secretary's recent attacks upon the whole idea of disengagement; but they are to be seen also in the lectures which Mr. Acheson delivered last October at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy and which have now been published under the title *Power and Diplomacy*. In this volume, Mr. Acheson operates on the assumption that no trust can be placed in Soviet restraint or Soviet promises. "All that the Soviet regime can accomplish in Europe, without risk, it will attempt." "One cannot," he adds, "argue with those who believe otherwise, so strong is the will to believe. But since Hungary the number of these must be small." What this means, of course, is that we must continue to show the Russians that we are determined to oppose any aggression on their part; and this necessitates our patching up the wounds of Suez, redoubling our efforts to advance the unification of Western Europe, and maintaining, and increasing, our military strength. Mr. Acheson is no happier than Mr. Kennan about our increasing reliance upon nuclear arms, and his doubts extend to tactical nuclear weapons and to atomic sharing; but he is insistent that the Western countries can afford to build conventional forces strong enough to increase the ability of NATO to discourage Soviet aggression.

When he talks about NATO, moreover, the former Secretary of State—unlike Mr. Kennan—thinks primarily of its military potential and believes that its future effectiveness will continue to depend upon the actual presence of American troops in Europe and upon the inclusion of German contingents. The neutralization of Germany—which is always considered the central part of any disengagement scheme—he regards as an illusion. History has no examples of a power as great as Germany forswearing foreign political ambition; and a reunited Germany that started its existence as a neutral state in a continent from which the Americans and the British had disappeared would probably end by succumbing to Soviet pressures and blandishments. But this need happen, Mr. Acheson suggests, only if we abandon the policy which we have followed since 1947. There are aspects of that policy, of course, that are in need of improvement. Mr. Acheson argues in favor of a much more ambitious program of foreign aid than we have in the past been willing to support and of an increased awareness of the benefits that can accrue from really large-scale assistance to countries like Brazil and India. Unlike Mr. Kennan, who seems to be worried by the lack of gratitude we receive for our aid, Mr. Acheson insists that our central concern should be to create an operating economic system for the non-Communist world, and that this involves swallowing our irritation over Mr. Nehru's foibles and getting on with the job.

It should be clear that the basic difference between these two books is one of mood. Mr. Kennan seems to be disillusioned by the inadequacies of our policy and appears to feel that only a radical change in direction can avert disaster. Mr. Acheson is willing to admit the desirability of amendment and the necessity of greater effort; but he is confident that the road we have followed is the right one and that it should be followed further, despite the risks ahead. One cannot guarantee favorable results, but "on the other hand, those who insist on basing foreign policy on sure things are likely to end up with no policy at all. . . . The development of productive power in the non-Communist world, with complementary efforts to increase all that makes for political cohesion, is the course most likely to bring about a workable international system and a stable power relationship. The probability of achieving all this, given full endeavor on our part, ranges from fair to excellent."

Jewish Drinking

ALCOHOL AND THE JEWS: A CULTURAL STUDY OF DRINKING AND SOBRIETY. By CHARLES R. SNYDER. Free Press and the Yale Center of Alcohol Studies. 226 pp. $5.00.

Reviewed by NATHAN GLAZER

THE Yale Center of Alcohol Studies has been interested for a number of years in the remarkable differences in the rates of alcoholism among various ethnic groups in America. Thus, Jews show very low rates for all the disorders and pathologies associated with alcohol: arrests for drunkenness, alcoholism, alcoholic psychoses, deaths from illnesses associated with heavy drinking, and the like. The Italians also show relatively low rates, while the Irish have perhaps the highest. These differences are being investigated in order to gain insight into the

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generally high level of alcoholic disorder in this country. *Alcohol and the Jews* is the first volume to be published; a book on the drinking habits of Italians in America is to appear shortly.

Many curious facts are involved in the relative immunity of Jews to alcoholism. To begin with, it turns out that there are proportionately fewer abstainers among American Jews than in any other religious group. Thus a remarkably wide experience of drinking, which also begins at a much earlier age owing to the wide ritual use of wine, tends to be associated with a very low rate of alcoholism. A variety of theories have in the past attempted to explain this phenomenon. It has been proposed that Jews (like ministers and women, said Kant) are in a peculiarly exposed position, and can't afford to lower their guard by getting drunk. Others have argued that Jews are an unusually cohesive group, with strong community and social controls, and have pointed out that such groups generally have a low rate of individual pathologies—less suicide, less mental disorder, less alcoholism. (This argument seems to break down in the face of the fact that the Jewish rate for suicide has been far greater than the Protestant or Catholic since the end of the 19th century; it is also doubtful that Jews still have lower rates of mental disorder, or, for that matter, greater cohesion.)

Another theory holds that Jews place a great emphasis on food and eating (as do the Chinese —who also have low rates for alcoholism) and indeed tend to suffer more from obesity, which may be their form of neurotic release. But as against this theory it can be said that obesity among Jews is nowhere a problem of the same magnitude as alcoholism among the Irish or indeed Americans generally.

The sociologists of the Yale Institute—and Mr. Snyder is one of them—have taken a somewhat different approach from the ones outlined above. First of all, they have concentrated on the "ritual" aspect of Jewish drinking. Not only do Jews first come into contact with alcohol in a context of religious ritual, but even their "secular" drinking is ritualized: the glass before dinner, the toasts at a wedding, and so on. By contrast, other people drink for effect—the actual impact of liquor—and not because it's "the thing to do at this point." Another sociologist calls Jewish drinking "instrumental" rather than "affective." By this he means that alcohol for the Jews serves as an instrument for observing certain social proprieties (it is interesting

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how many Jewish boys in Orthodox homes don't like the taste of wine and whiskey, which they are on the proper occasions freely offered). Again, whiskey is not taken to change one's psychic state, for the kick.

The notion of the instrumental use of alcohol in the Jewish group may be extended. Many of the interviews in this book (there are about seventy-five with New Haven Jewish men) indicate that a Jew will drink for "business reasons." Because of the way business is conducted in America, these men will feel that they should take a drink, but not in order to experience the physiological effects of alcohol.

This seems to me a reasonable approach, and is supported by a good deal of data. Thus, it it is interesting to note that according to a national survey of college students, those groups which have the highest proportion of abstainers (the Mormons and the strict Protestant denominations) also have the highest proportion of drunkards. Mr. Snyder's explanation is in line with that given above: since these are abstaining groups, the students never learned any rules in connection with drinking. For them, it is either abstaining or going to the devil.

But if the ritual context of Jewish drinking is so important in teaching habits of sobriety, what will be the effect of the steady decline in the number of the Orthodox, and, among them, of the detailed observance of Jewish law? Will not alcohol become dissociated from the context of ritual, norm, rule, control, and be used more and more (as indeed it is in American culture generally) as a means of inducing certain emotional states, and will not Jews begin to show the same rates of alcoholic disorder as non-Jews? As a matter of fact, in the student population, Reform Jews and secularized Jews get drunk as often as Irish Catholics and Protestants of British descent. However, there is no necessary direct relationship between these student figures and the end sum of alcoholic pathology. Perhaps the Jewish students are adapting to the student milieu, just as their fathers adapt to the business world, just as their elder brothers adapted to the army. If so, their drinking is still "instrumental" rather than "affective."

Mr. Snyder seems of the opinion that the non-religious social patterns (probably derived ultimately from the religious ones) which limit drinking in the Jewish group are still operative, and will continue for some time to prevent the Jewish rates for alcoholism from approaching the general American rate.

Judicial Review

THE BILL OF RIGHTS. By LEARNED HAND. Harvard. 82 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by MAURICE J. GOLDBLOOM

IN THESE three lectures, delivered at Harvard College, Judge Learned Hand endeavors to define the proper limits of the judicial power to review legislative action. On the whole, he is extremely wary of judges who act as lions under the throne—so much so, indeed, that he seems to prefer them to assume the role of pussy-cats. He does, to be sure, recognize that the Supreme Court's assumption of the power to decide the boundaries of the authority of states, Congress, and President was essential to the successful operation of the system set up by the Constitution. But he gives it a purely pragmatic sanction, and does not regard it as logically inherent in the constitutional structure. Hence he concludes that "this power . . . need not be exercised whenever a court sees, or thinks it sees, an invasion of the Constitution. It is always a preliminary question how importunately the occasion demands an answer."

In itself, this is not necessarily an extreme position; one may believe very strongly that it is the responsibility of the courts to uphold constitutional guarantees against the encroachments of the legislative and executive branches, and yet recognize that to do their job at all the courts must confine themselves to *substantial* issues. The Supreme Court obviously cannot concern itself effectively with the daily butchery of due process in a thousand traffic courts. Judge Hand indicates a considerable readiness to accept judicial restrictions on the legislative power when they are based on technical grounds. Thus he appears to approve the rejection of legislation because it delegates excessive powers to administrators and administrative tribunals, arguing that "the delegation of authority is *pro tanto* the abdication of authority over the subject matter by a transfer to others of authority that the legislature alone may exercise. Once we assume that the courts are to set the boundaries of each 'Department's' authority, it follows that they must say where legislation begins, however hazy its boundaries may be." As a matter of public policy, it is probably desirable that some limit be placed on the delegation of legislative authority; one feels this whenever one tangles with the maze of

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administrative regulations which assume the legislative function in many fields. But one may look in vain through the Constitution for any limitation on the right of delegation, with the single exception of the provision banning army appropriations covering more than two years.

Nor can it be said that judicial assumption of power in this field has been necessary to effect the smooth working of the constitutional machinery; as long as delegation is confined to powers clearly possessed by Congress, it cannot lead to conflict of authority between the central and state governments, or between the departments of the former. Moreover, the complexity of modern society is such that delegation of legislative power in many fields is inevitable; any real attempt by the courts to eliminate it would produce chaos. Hence if they are to impose a limit on delegation of legislative power, that limit will necessarily be arbitrary, and almost certainly shifting and indistinct. In fact, it is. Judge Hand seems similarly tolerant of court rejections of the use of the taxing power to effect social purposes, in cases where it was clear that the accomplishment of these purposes was the sole intent of the law, and revenue no part of its *raison d'être;* he cites the Child Labor and Guffey Coal Act cases. But aside from the judicial mind-reading involved, and the neglect of the Constitution to forbid taxation for purposes other than revenue, the record of the courts has been far from consistent in this question also. Thus the Harrison Narcotics Act has been upheld, under comparable circumstances. In the first two cases, the Supreme Court imported into the law the economic beliefs of its members, something it would be unlikely to do today; in the third, it gave ear instead to the moral postulates of the community, as it still often does.

In contrast to his tolerance for this type of judicial review, Judge Hand appears to have little use for court decisions invalidating legislation, whether Federal or state, when it conflicts with the specific guarantees of rights contained in the Constitution. This applies to the guarantees of the first eight amendments, to the due process and equal protection clauses of the Fourteenth (as in the integration cases), and to the use of those clauses to make the provisions of the Bill of Rights applicable to state action. He says that the limitations on Congressional power in the Bill of Rights may be regarded either as embodiments of the limitations current in 1787; as eternally valid expressions of "Natural Law," binding on all branches of government, or as mere recommendations. The first alternative he states, but does not discuss; the second he rejects, while apparently conceding that it was the one generally accepted by the Founding Fathers, on the ground that eternal truths are not available for consultation by the judiciary. (While this observation is quite plausible, its relevance to the issue is not altogether clear, since the letter of the Constitution *is* available to the judges, when they choose to consult it. The question is not whether the liberties it guarantees *are* eternally valid, but whether their enumeration in the Constitution means that they are to be regarded as valid restrictions on the legislative power as long as they remain there; if their validity ceases to be generally accepted, the Constitution can after all be amended.) Judge Hand himself chooses the third alternative, to

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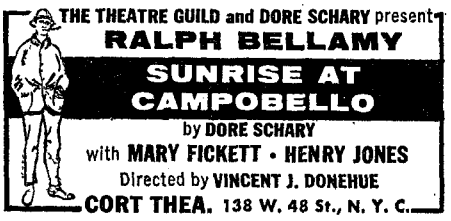
"read them as admonitory or hortatory, not definite enough to be guides on concrete occasions, prescribing no more than that temper of detachment, impartiality, and an absence of self-directed bias that is the whole content of justice." But the content of justice is—or should be—a good deal more than that. It consists not only in the impartial application of principles, but in the principles themselves, as Anatole France pointed out when he said that "The law, in its majestic impartiality, forbids the rich and the poor alike to sleep under bridges, to beg in the streets, and to steal bread." Judge Hand justly mocks the imprecision of the legal use of such words as "reasonable"; something of the same sort enters into his rejection of the "clear and present danger" limitation on legislative interference with freedom of speech and press. Yet even these criteria seem to me to be models of precision next to those of "impartiality" and "detachment," when these latter are separated from any objective standards.

THERE is a case to be made for legislative supremacy, in the name of the popular will. But it is not a case which is consistent with the preservation of a system which distinguishes between constitutional and statute law, and gives precedence to the former. And it is also not a case which Judge Hand is willing to make —though this is not always as clear as it might be. It is not surprising that these lectures have been quoted by supporters of the Butler-Jenner proposals to curb the Supreme Court, but Judge Hand has since gone on record against such measures. And this is consistent with the position which he advances here; he believes that the courts must have final authority, but that they should not use it to protect the liberties of citizens against legislative intrusion. This is not because he does not believe in these liberties; he has on more than one occasion indicated his dissatisfaction with the erosion to which they have been subjected in recent years. But he believes the legislative judgment that they must be curtailed should be controlling, irrespective of the terms of the Constitution or the opinions of the judges. This seems to me a dangerous doctrine, all the more so in view of the frequency with which legislative bodies take a cavalier attitude toward civil liberties, confident that the courts will remedy any abuses of which they may have been guilty.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Two Jewish Artists

MODIGLIANI ET SON OEUVRE. By ARTHUR PFANNSTIEHL. La Bibliotheque des Arts (Paris). 191 pp., ill. $2.50.
MODIGLIANI. By CLAUDE ROY. Skira. 136 pp., ill. $5.75.
MA VIE. By MARC CHAGALL. Librairie Stock (Paris). 259 pp., ill. $4.50.

Reviewed by ALFRED WERNER

I ONCE asked Chagall how he had managed to reach his seventies in good health, and to reap all the success due him, whereas that other great Jewish artist of his generation, Modigliani, perished miserably at thirty-six, appreciated only by a few fellow-artists and friends. Chagall hinted at the difference in their backgrounds: Modigliani was an "aristocrat" who plunged

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himself into real Bohemianism (more fatal to Jews, Chagall thought, than to others); he, Chagall, came from a humble, simple family of East European Jews, and Paris had made no great changes in his traditional way of life.

Pfannstiehl's biography—the first version of which was published in 1929—supplies the material to corroborate the point made by Chagall. Amedeo Modigliani (1884-1920) was, and was so considered, a Tuscan gentleman whom neither alcoholism nor poverty could rob of his *"noblesse d'âme"*; if, reduced to bare subsistence in Paris, to which he had gone from Leghorn as a young man, he yearned for his native land, his memories did not take him back to a wretched *shtetl*, but to *"cara Italia"* of Dante, Leopardi, and Carduzzi.

Modigliani was a Sephardic Jew, and Pfannstiehl notes that the artist did not conceal his origin. He proudly emphasized his blood relationship with Spinoza (his mother's family, the Garsins, had a sister of the philosopher in their family tree). To some Royalists making loud anti-Semitic remarks in a Montmartre café he shouted *"Je suis Juif . . ."* and he silenced them with a threatening gesture. To several Parisian friends he once lectured on problems of high finance, remarking that, after all, he was the son and grandson of Jewish bankers. The ironic aspect was that at that time he himself had not a *sou*. . . .

Judaism, however, played no important role in Modigliani's life, which was rather marked by the terrible gap between artist and society. The severest frustration, perhaps, was that this artist, through a combination of financial difficulties and physical frailty, was unable to realize his ambition to concentrate on sculpture; the few pieces in stone he executed Pfannstiehl rightly considers to be among his best works, and others judge Modigliani's sculptures as superior to his paintings.

Pfannstiehl's explanation of Modigliani's dipsomania, largely responsible for his early death, is free of puritanic self-righteousness: he drank *"pour s'évader de la douloureuse réalité."* This reality was dolorous, indeed, despite the efforts of two individuals who put themselves wholeheartedly at his disposal. One was the poet Leopold Zborowski who became his dealer and never, not for a minute, doubted that his artist, hitherto unknown, had a glorious future ahead. The other was the artist's common-law wife, Jeanne Hebuterne, who faithfully shared the appalling anxieties of his

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last years, bore him a daughter, and, pregnant again at the time of his death, flung herself from the fifth-floor window of her parents' home. Rigidly Catholic, the parents refused to allow the body of their daughter to be interred beside the remains of her Jewish husband. Only years later could these bodies be reunited in a double grave in the Père Lachaise Cemetery.

The outstanding contribution of the current edition of the book is the *catalogue raisonné* of Modigliani's paintings, listing 362 items, as against the 289 tentatively noted in Pfannstiehl's *catalogue presumé* of 1929. The finest collection of his early work remains that of Dr. Paul Alexandre in Paris, who was a young medical practitioner when he began buying. Among American collectors, Dr. Albert Barnes and Chester Dale were the most eager Modigliani enthusiasts.

While it is understandable that no attempt was made to list all the drawings, watercolors, and pastels that have survived*—there must be thousands of them—Pfannstiehl, having such a high opinion of Modigliani's ability as a sculptor, might have catalogued the works in limestone. More than twenty have been definitely identified, but their chronology has not yet been established, and their whereabouts are not generally known.

Claude Roy makes excellent use of Pfannstiehl's standard work, and of the score of reminiscences, eyewitness accounts, and short monographs that have appeared mainly in Paris in the last thirty-five years. Though straight biography is by no means neglected, the author insists that this cannot help very much toward a better understanding of the artist's unique and original work. Roy points out, for instance, that the paintings of the last years are marked by serenity, harmony, and pensive aristocratic detachment, while actually Modigliani's life during the same period was full of strife and marred by disappointment, sickness, and poverty. He heartily disagrees with those who try to find the key to Modigliani's work in his Jewish origin ("it is hard to see what his art can possibly owe to his Jewish descent"). And, indeed, the ample quotations he cites from letters, poetry, and notations upon pencil sketches, reveal Modigliani as an ardent disciple of Nietzsche and D'Annunzio.

*Pfannstiehl in a new book, *Dessins de Modigliani*, just published by Mermod in Switzerland, goes a long way toward filling this gap.

The fifty-odd superb color plates in the Skira volume include many pictures never exhibited in the United States, not even in the extensive Museum of Modern Art show of 1951. Whereas Pfannstiehl provides no illustrations of Modigliani's sculpture, Roy selects three works in limestone. Among the portraits are those of the young Brancusi, Diego Rivera, Picasso, Max Jacob (with his first wife), and Chaim Soutine. Two of the oils were painted just a few days before the artist's premature death.

Pfannstiehl refers to many of Modigliani's colleagues, but oddly makes no reference to Chagall. Roy cites Chagall, but not the famous —or notorious—*La Ruche* ("Bee-Hive") where Modigliani had a studio next to Chagall. There is no mention of Modigliani in Chagall's autobiography, written in Moscow in, or before, 1922. Yet in the Parisian chapter all the famous artists (including Renoir, still alive and active in 1910) as well as such neophytes as Leger or Segonzac are referred to. In my conversations with him, Chagall tactfully hinted at the gap between himself, shy, provincial, imbued with Hasidism, and the flamboyant Italian, only three years older, but long a denizen of Montmartre, and addicted to absinthe, hashish, and sex.

ACTUALLY, the Parisian interlude—1910-1914 —though of major importance to Chagall, who there and then was initiated into modern art, covers a few pages only, and is written with less warmth, less poetic fervor than the sections dealing with childhood and adolescence in Vitebsk, and with the young artist's return to his native country after the outbreak of the First World War. Even though the staccato style employed by the writer—reminiscent of Alexander Blok, Vladimir Mayakowski, and other Expressionist poets—becomes a bit wearisome after a while, one is hard put to find a more loving description of the ghetto world which to all but a few septuagenarians, is now barely more than a legend. The boy watches the *tashlich* ceremony at the Dvina River, his townsmen discarding their sins into the water. He is enchanted by the Haggadah and the red wine in the glasses on the Passover table. He is thrilled by the somber service in the synagogue. But of the hundreds of children in Vitebsk who have had these experiences, only one somehow—almost by accident—became an artist. Chagall tells how he once copied a portrait of the musician Rubinstein from a

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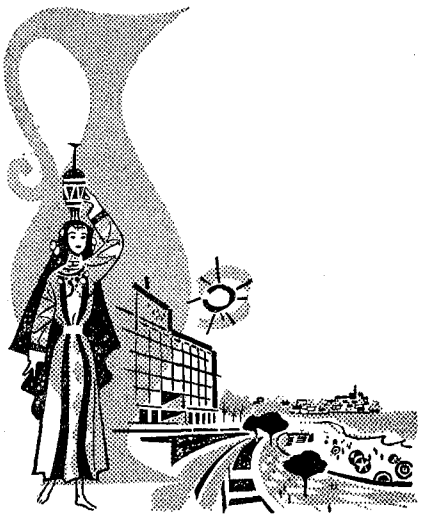
Russian periodical, and thereupon decided he would enter the local art school of Yehuda Penn.

Seeing one of the boy's paintings, his mother ("a lake of suffering") reacted as any other Jewish mother would have, so many decades ago: "I pity you. . . . How does this thing come into our family?" His father ("a candle burning and putting itself out at the same time") was upset, too; but when it became obvious that to Marc the profession of a photographer was no substitute for the vocation of an artist, he gave his *meshuggener* son twenty-seven rubles to seek his fortune, and further education, in St. Petersburg.

The chapter on the boy's life in St. Petersburg where, as a Jew, he was only allowed to reside under enormous difficulties, but where he studied with the successful Bakst (himself a Jew), having Nijinski, the future dancer, for a classmate; the pages about Paris (*"mon second Vitebsk"*) and the Salon des Indépendents; about Berlin and that brilliant writer and dealer, Herwarth Walden; the description of his return to Russia, where the soldier Chagall was fortunate enough to be assigned to a desk job in a military bureau by his brother-in-law—all these episodes are rendered with something of the charm and wit of his best paintings.

The October Revolution catapulted Chagall to the job of Commissar for Art in his native city. But there is little political discussion in the book; instead, there is a great deal about the artist's preoccupation with the State Jewish Theatre and Habimah for which he made all sorts of designs, and about the various Isms freely battling each other before Social Realism was decreed to be the only true creed. Fortunately, in 1922 it was still possible to obtain a permit to leave the Soviet Union even for a man as much exposed through his work as Chagall was. With Bella, whom he had married in 1915, and their little daughter "Idotchka," he emigrated to Paris.

Considering the large number of memoirs by European Jewish personalities far less important than Chagall that have been rendered into English, it comes as a surprise that no publishing firm has ever presented *Ma Vie* to British or American readers. Originally written in Russian, the book was translated into French by Bella Chagall and was published by Librairie Stock in 1931. Excerpts appeared in pre-Hitler Germany, in a Russian magazine in Paris, in



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the periodicals *View* (New York, January 1946) and COMMENTARY (April 1946).

The illustrations are as important as the text itself. They consist of fourteen of the twenty etchings and drypoints made by Chagall after the book was finished, and published in album form without the text (*Mein Leben,* Paul Cassirer, Berlin, 1923). All but one of the thirty-two early drawings (*ca.* 1910-1911) in the 1931 edition of *Ma Vie* are also included.

All his whims and humor, so appealing in the familiar oils, appear here in black-and-white renderings of a world of people standing on their heads or floating through the air, of pious Jews, primitive farmers, domestic animals, ramshackle houses, and Russian churches. While meant to illustrate a story, they are independent works of art, testimonies to Chagall's powerful imaginative vision, original expression, and grasp of the significant. Only after a perusal of *Ma Vie* is it possible fully to understand why childhood impressions lie beneath the subject matter for all of the artist's rich *oeuvre.*

BOOK REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

MIDGE DECTER is a young New York writer whose work has appeared in COMMENTARY and *Partisan Review.*

GORDON A. CRAIG, professor of history at Princeton, is a specialist on military affairs.

NATHAN GLAZER, author of *American Judaism* and formerly an editor of COMMENTARY, has been a frequent contributor.

MAURICE J. GOLDBLOOM's comments on problems of civil liberties are well known to our readers.

ALFRED WERNER is an art historian and critic who publishes widely.

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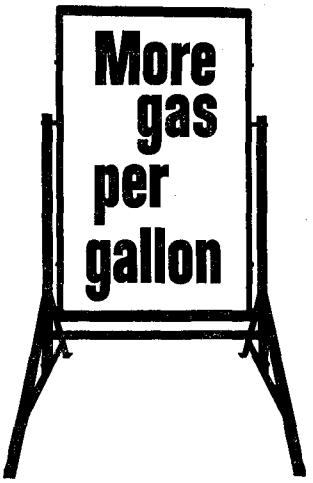

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